

**THE ANSWER**

*(It's 7:30 on the same Friday night in the same alternate suburban reality. Lights up on KEITH in a tux, sitting on the toilet—lid down—in THE BATHROOM. CELIA appears outside the bathroom in a wedding dress. She goes to the door and knocks.)*

CELIA: Babe?

KEITH: *(Relieved; going to the door.)* Oh, thank God, Celia—Hey!—

CELIA: Hey! The guys said you wanted to...talk to me?

KEITH: Yeah—I'm sorry, I'm so sorry.

CELIA: It's okay., It's okay. People are just...you know...wondering if they should stay or go.

KEITH: What—no—!

CELIA: Should they stay?

KEITH: Yes, they should stay! Of course they should stay!

CELIA: Okay, good! *(Little beat.)* So...what's goin' on?, You okay?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah. It's just—I was just standing up there in front of all those people—you were just about to walk down the aisle and all—and I don't know...my feet got so cold.

CELIA: What?

KEITH: And...I just thought I was gonna be sick, you know?—My stomach.—So I came up here.

CELIA: Okay.

KEITH: 'Cause I guess it just hit me how *big* this is.

CELIA: Well, it *is* big.

KEITH: Yeah. *(Little beat.)*

CELIA: Um...can I come in so we can talk about this? *(She starts to open the door, which Keith slams shut—and locks if possible.)*

KEITH: No! You can't come in here! I can't see the bride on the wedding day till the wedding part, you know that! >

CELIA: Keith—

KEITH: And you can't see the groom! It's bad luck!

CELIA: Well, yeah, if you believe in that sort // of thing!

KEITH: Well, I'm not takin' any chances!

CELIA: Keith—

KEITH: Wait-wait-wait: You know what?! Make a blindfold!

CELIA: *(Receive and process.)* What?

KEITH: I'm gonna make one, too, with my tie.

CELIA: Keith—

KEITH: Here—*(He grabs a roll of toilet paper for Celia to make a blindfold out of.)*

CELIA: What?

KEITH: Hold on! *(He opens the door—so he can't see her and she can't see him—and hands her the toilet paper.)* Wrap some toilet paper around your head like a blindfold so you can't see me. I'm gonna make one, too, so I can't see you.

CELIA: Babe!—

KEITH: Do it! 'Cause we can't see each other on the wedding day till the wedding part, and I really need to talk to you.

CELIA: *(Amused and a little irked.)* Okay. *(Celia takes the toilet paper roll and wraps toilet paper around her head to make a blindfold.)*

KEITH: *(Finishing his own blindfold—using his tie.)* Tell me when you're done. *(He waits. Celia blindfolds herself.)* Are you done?

CELIA: No—hold on—give me a sec!

KEITH: *(Finishes his blindfold.)* Well, tell me when you're done! I'm done!, Are you done?

CELIA: Hold on...

KEITH: Are you done now?

CELIA: Keith! Yes—(*She finishes her blindfold.*)—yes—I'm done.

KEITH: All right. (*Going to the door; stopping.*) Are you sure?!

CELIA: Yes!

KEITH: Okay! (*Keith opens the door, gropes for Celia, finds her, pulls her into the bathroom, slams the door shut, and hugs her long and hard.*)

CELIA: Hey-hey-hey!, It's okay! KEITH: Oh, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry! >

CELIA: It's okay!

KEITH: Oh, God, it's good to see you!

CELIA: Well, it's good to...see...you, too.

KEITH: Oh, I love you so much!

CELIA: I love you, too!

KEITH: Oh, I'm so sorry...(*He's in a bit of a state.*)...it's just...this is a lot of *pressure*, you know? >

CELIA: Yeah, // but—

KEITH: I mean, the *expectations*! That we're just gonna live happily ever after?—When everybody knows that this is a *risk* we're taking! I mean, we're setting ourselves up for failure!, >

CELIA: What?

KEITH: 'Cause chances are we're not gonna make it you know!

CELIA: What? // Why do you [say that]—?

KEITH: 'Cause over 50% of all marriages end in divorce, right? Isn't that the statistic?

CELIA: (*Amused and maybe relieved.*) Keith! What—?!?

KEITH: And what if you end up hating me?

CELIA: Keith! I'm // never gonna *hate* you!

KEITH: I mean, you've *seen* it: Married people who *hate* each other?, We've all seen that! >

CELIA: Keith—

KEITH: It's so *latent*. And *awful*. But I get it. Especially in women because women give up more when they get married. I mean—your *names*!!, You give up your *names* right out of the gate!

CELIA: But...I'm not doing that! I'm keeping my name!

KEITH: Well, yeah, but you're gonna be doing more housework than you've ever done, // because >

CELIA: Wha—?!?

KEITH: that's what happens! Husbands create seven extra hours of housework a week for their wives: That's a fact!, I read that! And I don't want to be that guy.

CELIA: Keith! You're not gonna be that guy because I'm not gonna let you be that guy. And anyway, I'm the messy one! We've lived together for three years and I'm the one who makes more housework for you!

KEITH: Celia: You're not listening to me. I asked you a question and you didn't answer it. What if *this...* (*i.e., our marriage*) doesn't work?

CELIA: What if what doesn't work?

KEITH: Us. You and me. Married.

CELIA: When did you ask me that? >

KEITH: Just now—

CELIA: You never asked me that.

KEITH: Well, I'm asking you now!: What if we get married...and we can't make it work? What'll we do?

CELIA: Keith—God— (*Searches.*)

KEITH: Split up?

CELIA: I don't know...

KEITH: Get a divorce?

CELIA: (*Searches.*) I guess.

KEITH: Just like that!?!

CELIA: (*Struggles to make sense of what he's saying.*) Yeah, if that's what we want, yeah, // but I—

KEITH: Well, that's not something I'm ever gonna *want*!!!

CELIA: Well, me // neither!!

KEITH: I don't want to get *divorced*!!

CELIA: Well, let's not, // then!

KEITH: We have to promise each other right now that when we get married we will *never* get divorced!!

CELIA: All right!, I promise! That's kinda what today // is all about!

KEITH: No—but wait: If we do that...then we'd be stuck with each other.

CELIA: *Keith*!?! What're you—? Babe: (*Little beat.*) I want to be stuck with you. (*Beat. Realization.*) The question right now seems to be...do *you*...wanna be stuck...with me?

KEITH: (*Beat. Keith gasps. Elation! A solution!*) Oh my God!

CELIA: What?

KEITH: Oh-my-God! Oh-my-God!

CELIA: *What?*

KEITH: That's what this is! That's what this is all about!!

CELIA: What?, What what's all about?

KEITH: I never...*answered*...that question!

CELIA: Huh?

KEITH: I never answered you, when you asked me to marry you!

CELIA: Yes, you did!



KEITH: No, I didn't! I just...stood there all stupid, 'cause you // surprised the heck out of me!

CELIA: Yeah, but then you picked me up and hugged me and spun me around!

KEITH: Yeah, and the next thing I know, we're just doing all the things people do when they decide to get married—the invitations, you're trying on dresses, checking out bands and venues—which we didn't like any of, so we decided to do it here, in our home...

CELIA: Yeah. And all that wasn't YES?

KEITH: No, 'cause I didn't *say* it!

CELIA: Yes, you did!

KEITH: When?

CELIA: (*She ponders.*) Well—

KEITH: Do you remember hearing me say YES?

CELIA: Well, I don't know...No, I guess // not, but—

KEITH: No, you don't, because I didn't say it! And I want to! I wanna say yes!

CELIA: Well then say YES, and let's go do this! (*She starts to go.*)

KEITH: All right, well, then ask me again!!

CELIA: (*Stopping.*) What?—

KEITH: Ask me again right now! If I'll marry you! Like you did that night! So I can say YES!

CELIA: Sweetie—

KEITH: I wanna say YES, Celia. I need to say YES. So ask me again., Please., Now.

CELIA: Okay, okay.

KEITH: Thank you.

CELIA: Just—here—(*Celia goes to take Keith's makeshift blindfold off.*)

KEITH: What are you doing?!?

CELIA: Taking our blindfolds off—

KEITH: No! // Stop! *(Keith stops her.)*

CELIA: *(She tries to take the blindfold off repeatedly through what follows. Keith thwarts every attempt.)* Yes, so I can look in your eyes and >

KEITH: No, no!

CELIA: ask you if you'll marry me >

KEITH: No-no!

CELIA: like I did that night.

KEITH: No! No! Don't! 'Cause when I say YES, then we will have seen each other on our wedding day before the wedding part, and that's bad luck!

CELIA: *(Amused/exasperated.)* All right. *(Beat. Celia gets on bended knee and takes his hands in hers.)* Keith Goodwin: I know this isn't the way this is typically done...but nothing about us is very typical...and so: I love you...and...*(She stops. She's confused. Beat.)*

KEITH: Babe?

CELIA: Sorry. *(Collects herself. Keith is happy.)* I love you...and... *(Again, she stops and struggles. After a beat, she pulls away from Keith, pulls off her blindfold, and stares at Keith.)*

KEITH: What? *(Keith rips his blindfold off. Their eyes meet for the first time today. And maybe for the first time in a long time.)* What's wrong? Celie? *(Beat.)*

CELIA: I—... *(Realization.)* I can't do this.

KEITH: What?

CELIA: I can't ask you [to marry me]...again...because—...Oh, God: *(Beat. Painful realization.)* I don't want you to say yes.

KEITH: What?

CELIA: I don't want this. *(Long, long beat.)* Oh, God. I'm sorry, I'm so sorry—

KEITH: No. It's okay. 'Cause...*(Realization.)*...I...don't...either. *(Long, long, long beat—of disbelief. This is completely uncharted territory. Then, suddenly:)*

CELIA: But—wait: I love you!

KEITH: Me, too.

CELIA: I really // do.

KEITH: I love you too. *(Long, long, long, painful beat of confusion.)*

CELIA: What do we do?!?

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KEITH: I don't know. *(Long, long, long beat as Keith searches for an answer. This silence should be awful.)* I guess...we should go tell everybody.

CELIA: What? What do we tell them?

KEITH: I don't know. *(Searches.)* Somethin'. *(Beat. Lights fade as Celia and Keith start to go and tell everybody their news. Lights fade. Existential space vacuum sound/Music/Transition.)*

**THE END** *(And we move on to...)*