

Made for Each Other

by

Audrey Glenn

Patience Hayes walked arm in arm with her beau, Gilbert Brand, and waited eagerly for him to continue retelling a humorous event from the latest session of congress.

“Then he said . . .” Gilbert wheezed with laughter. “He said—”

“Mr. Adams, you mean?” Patience clarified. “Mr. John Adams?”

Gilbert nodded. “He said, ‘Where are the friends of liberty? There must be one man among us who will not remain asleep in the face of this new danger!’” Gilbert’s further laughter was contagious.

“And then?” Patience urged, once she could speak.

“He spun around,” Gilbert gasped, “and pointed to Mr. Franklin, and—” Gilbert broke off and clutched his side.

“And?”

“Everyone turned to look at Franklin, but he was asleep in his chair,” Gilbert managed to say.

Patience joined Gilbert in laughing. “Oh, dear. How did Mr. Adams respond to that?”

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Gilbert wiped tears away from his eyes. “He grew very red and suggested Mr. Hancock censure Mr. Franklin, and then Mr. Beaufort said—” Gilbert looked up and down Pine Street and then lowered his voice, “Beaufort said that if the president was to start handing out censure for conduct unbecoming then he’d suggest citations for distasteful waistcoats.”

“He didn’t!”

“He did! Mr. Hancock tried to get everyone in order, smirking all the while, but he failed and had to call a recess.” Gilbert smiled gleefully.

The couple had long since arrived in front of the Hayes’s home on Pine Street. “Will you come and take supper with us?” Patience urged.

Gilbert’s expression grew pained. “I wish I could.” He brought her hand to his lips and kissed it. “I agreed to make visits to three different delegates.”

“On behalf of Mr. Hancock?” Patience guessed, and Gilbert nodded. “He really ought to pay you for all the work you do on his behalf.” Mr. Hancock’s assignments seemed to prevent Gilbert spending more than a few minutes in her company six days out of seven.

Gilbert turned her hand over and kissed the inside of her wrist. “He doesn’t have quite as much time for the work of Congress now that he must divide it with his wife.”

“Fortunate Mrs. Hancock,” Patience grumbled.

Gilbert looked up suddenly. “Do you mean that?”

“Mean what?”

“You said Mrs. Hancock was fortunate; do you mean . . .” Gilbert’s voice trailed off and he looked expectantly at Patience.

Did he think her jealous? “I don’t mean she’s fortunate to have married Mr. Hancock, if that’s what you’re asking. He’s

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perfectly nice, but I vastly prefer you.”

Despite being in the street, Gilbert stole a kiss. “Thank you for that, but I was asking if you wished to be married.”

Patience looked at Gilbert incredulously. “Are you truly asking me to marry you?” Though the eventuality had certainly crossed her mind, they’d never spoken of the future with any certainty.

Gilbert laughed awkwardly. “Of course I wouldn’t ask you in the street. Just wondering how you felt about the general idea of marriage. To me.”

She could’ve teased him by pretending to consider it, but instead, she took pity on him. “I think it’s a wonderful idea.”

“You do?” Patience couldn’t recall ever seeing someone as happy as Gilbert appeared to be, and she was certain her own expression matched his.

“I do.” She couldn’t resist adding, “Then in addition to Sunday dinner and daily walks, I might see you for a quarter of an hour in the morning before you have to dash off to Congress.”

“I think I can do a little better than that.” Gilbert kissed her cheek, the tip of her nose, and her forehead in quick succession. “I can ask Mr. Hancock to let me off one night a week so I might take supper with you.”

Patience wasn’t sure if Gilbert was joking, but she hardly had time to consider before he began kissing her again.

“Hope I’m not interrupting,” a voice called.

Patience and Gilbert broke apart immediately to see her father standing with David. Patience cringed in embarrassment. “Good afternoon, Papa, David.”

Gilbert bowed. “Beaufort; Mr. Hayes.”

Papa nodded to Gilbert. “Perhaps you have time to talk?”

“Of course!”

“I thought you had multiple visits to make?” Patience

reminded Gilbert.

“Oh, I’m certain they can wait,” Gilbert assured her.

Despite his obvious nerves at the prospect of speaking to her father, Gilbert wasn’t afraid to take her hand as they entered the house.

Patience squeezed Gilbert’s hand in return. “Good fortune,” she whispered. She wasn’t afraid Papa would withhold consent for them to marry; more than likely he hadn’t noticed Gilbert was courting her and wanted to discover his intentions, but Gilbert didn’t know that.

Gilbert nodded tightly and straightened his neckcloth before following Papa and David into the drawing room.



Gilbert looked around the bar room of City Tavern, slightly confused how he’d ended up there. Within the space of an hour he’d gone from discussing marriage with Patience, to asking and receiving Josiah Hayes’s permission to propose, and finally to celebrating in City Tavern at Beaufort’s insistence.

Gilbert was overjoyed—and overawed—that beautiful, intelligent Patience wished to marry him. It was only a great deal to try and take in all at once.

It hadn’t taken all that much to convince Gilbert to put his tedious errands aside. In no time at all, it seemed everyone he knew in Philadelphia was celebrating with him. Even his brother Phineas had appeared, and Gilbert had thought him hundreds of leagues away on a merchant voyage.

John Hancock clapped a hand on Gilbert’s back. “Now, when will the wedding be?”

“I’ll have to talk to Patience,” Gilbert replied. “See what

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she's thinking."

Phineas set down a mug of ale. "So you haven't actually acquired the lady's acceptance?"

Gilbert looked uncertainly back at his brother. "I suppose I haven't." Patience had said she thought marriage to him was a wonderful idea. Surely she'd meant *her* marriage to him and not just the idea that he'd one day marry?

"Well, you must rectify that immediately," Beaufort urged.

"You must spare no effort to make it a memorable occasion," Hancock advised. "When I asked Dolly to be my wife, I made her a present of ten yards of chintz."

Gilbert shifted in his chair. Hopefully Patience wouldn't expect an expensive gift. He hardly knew how he'd come up with enough money to house his wife, much less shower her with tokens of his esteem. He'd been fortunate to find a home with his brother, but Patience wouldn't wish to share a single room with him and Phineas.

Mr. Randolph took pity on him. "That's not the only way to show Patience the depth of your feelings. I'm sure you can arrange something lovely without spending a great deal of money."

"A fine dinner, perhaps," Beaufort suggested. "I could ask our cook to prepare a picnic."

Mr. Hayes adopted a dreamy look. "I took Anne to a lovely spot on the water when I asked her to marry me."

"There you are, brother! You must take Patience out on my ship." Phineas cuffed Gilbert's shoulder.

"Isn't your ship in Chester?" The port city was nearly twenty miles off.

Phineas shrugged. "You could talk on the journey."

"You can borrow my coach," Beaufort offered.

Gilbert's spirits began to rise. "Thank you very much!"

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Mr. Carter, owner of three merchant ships, set down his own mug and spoke for the first time that evening. "Have you ever been to Chester?" he asked Gilbert.

"No, why?"

"Helen didn't think very much of the place when I took her there."

Phineas looked sharply at his colleague. "Presumably you didn't offer her an expensive gift, or a fine dinner."

"I did not," Carter admitted.

"A silhouette," Hancock said suddenly.

Gilbert turned towards the president of congress. "Pardon?"

"You must cut silhouettes for each other. They cost almost nothing to make, but will provide a memorable keepsake of your special day." Hancock smiled at Gilbert. "I can supply the paper and scissors, if you like!"

"That's very kind of you."

"Think nothing of it," Hancock assured him.

Phineas choked on his drink, but Gilbert ignored his brother's antics. Of course a man as rich as Hancock could certainly afford more than a few sheets of paper and scissors, but while Hancock could be thoughtlessly generous, he seemed to have trouble putting himself in the position of a less wealthy man.

Gilbert settled back in his chair. Perhaps he hadn't completely secured Patience's hand, but with his friends' help, he'd soon rectify that.



Patience pulled a cap over her hair and paused for a brief glance at the looking glass before going downstairs to meet

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Gilbert. All she knew of the day is that they were going to Chester, for some unaccountable reason, and that Gilbert was most likely planning to ask her to marry him.

She heard Mercy and Verity fighting before she saw them.

“I’m older, so I’m the best choice of chaperone,” Verity informed Mercy.

“You said you had a play to write,” Mercy shot back.

Patience stepped in between her sisters. “I thought Constance was accompanying me.”

“Constance is ill,” Verity informed her. “She’s been lying down in Mama’s bed since after breakfast.”

It was hardly surprising news; poor Constance seemed to be ill every other day. “Well, which one of you will come with us?”

Mercy and Verity spoke over each other in attempts to explain why each deserved the outing more. If it was up to Patience, she’d send them both off with Gilbert while she got some work done in peace.

That wasn’t true; she was looking forward to spending the day with him, and to accepting his proposal. She could do without her younger sisters bickering, however. If only Constance hadn’t gotten ill! “You may both come, but only if you promise not to argue,” Patience informed them, and both girls clapped for joy. “Gilbert hasn’t arrived yet?” He’d told her to expect him at noon

Verity ran into the drawing room to look out the window. “No sign of him.”

Patience slipped into the kitchen to scavenge for something to make up for the breakfast she’d skipped in favor of research. She poured herself a cup of cold coffee, took a sip, and made a face at the bitter taste before pouring some milk in.

“Gilbert’s here!” Mercy called.

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There was no time for anything else; hopefully Gilbert had arranged for something to eat on the journey. Patience downed the rest of the coffee and made her way to the front of the house.

Verity and Mercy hadn't waited to seat themselves in David's coach, so Gilbert was left alone to greet Patience in the entryway.

Patience walked straight into Gilbert's outstretched arms. "You look very well," he told her. She answered him with a kiss, and he brought his hand to the small of her back and drew her closer.

She slid her hands under his coat and wrapped her arms around his waist. "Shall we send the coach off with Verity and Mercy?"

"And avail ourselves of the drawing room?" Gilbert suggested, before kissing her again.

It was a tempting prospect. "Yes, Constance is indisposed, and with the other girls gone we could have the whole day to ourselves." Patience grew more excited as she spoke.

Gilbert held her face gently with one hand. "If you like." He smiled, but there was something in his eyes that gave Patience pause.

"I'm just being silly," Patience said quickly. "Of course I can't wait to see everything you've planned."

Gilbert's face lit up. "If you're certain."

His boyish excitement was nearly too endearing for Patience to withstand. "I am." They kissed once more and went outside.

Gilbert helped Patience into the coach and then climbed in beside her. He stretched his arm out behind her and she leaned into him, heedless of Verity and Mercy sitting on the bench opposite.

"I like this," Verity said, running a hand across the purple

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silk upholstery of the cushions. "I want to have a coach just like it one day."

Mercy pointed at something on the coach floor. "What's in that?"

"Beaufort had his cook pack something for us to eat," Gilbert explained.

"Rolls?" Mercy dived for the basket.

The coach had barely made it to the end of Pine Street when Verity asked how far it was to Chester. "Two or three hours?" she repeated, after Gilbert told her. "What are we to do?"

"I'm quite content to just rest here," Patience informed Verity. Gilbert beamed at Patience and moved his hand to her waist. She responded by snuggling closer to him.

"And for those of us who don't have a suitor to occupy our attention?" Verity pressed.

"Oh!" Gilbert declared. "I forgot." He rummaged inside the inside pocket of his coat and pulled out some paper and scissors. "A gift from Mr. Hancock."

Mercy blinked at Gilbert, roll in hand. "For cutting paper dolls? Does he think us children?"

"They're for silhouettes," Gilbert explained.

Verity and Mercy accepted the supplies and began snipping away.

Gilbert dropped a kiss on Patience's forehead. "Do you want something to eat?"

Patience was about to respond with an affirmative when she realized her stomach was a trifle unsettled. Perhaps in Constance's absence, she was taking on the role of being made ill by the motion of the coach. "No, thank you." She closed her eyes and tried to breathe through the nausea.

"What do you think?" Mercy asked. She held up her paper for inspection.

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Verity gasped. “You’ve given me jowls!” Mercy denied it, but couldn’t seem to help herself snickering. Verity took up her scissors again and altered her own paper until she’d made it look like a potato with lips. “How do you care for your likeness?”

Mercy snorted. “Very funny.”

The churning in Patience’s stomach was growing worse with every moment and she covered her ears to try and block out the noise of her sisters’ bickering.



Gilbert looked down at Patience, who’d been sleeping fitfully against him for over an hour. He peered out the coach window. “I think we’re approaching Chester!” he announced. He certainly hoped so. After Patience had fallen asleep he’d been attempting to keep her younger sisters occupied with whispered riddles and he couldn’t think of another one to save his life. Gilbert leaned towards the window, careful not to disturb Patience in his arms.

What he saw filled him with sudden dread. Instead of orderly stone streets and stately brick buildings, Chester was comprised of dirt roads and ramshackle wooden buildings. Had Phineas really thought the place a perfect destination for a proposal?

Patience sat up slowly and clutched at her stomach. “Stop the coach,” she moaned.

Gilbert thumped on the coach ceiling and felt the vehicle slowly roll to a stop. Patience scrambled over him in her haste to get outside and waved off his offer to assist her down. She crouched at the side of the road and was immediately sick, right on the outskirts of town.

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“Oh, no!” Verity cried. “I hope Constance didn’t have something catching.”

Gilbert jumped down from the coach and approached Patience. “Are you all right?”

“No,” Patience said weakly.

Gilbert fought a wave of panic. He’d do anything to help Patience, but what would possibly make her feel better at such a time? He placed a tentative hand on her shoulder. “Do you feel well enough to return home now, or should we stop at a tavern or something where you could rest?”

“Don’t let me ruin the day,” Patience wheezed. “Perhaps it will pass and we can continue on.” She took long breaths through her nose.

“I could never be happy while you’re ill,” Gilbert informed her. He’d just have to find another time to ask her to marry him. From what he’d already seen of the town before them, it was probably just as well they were leaving. Even the potter’s field he often met Patience at was more picturesque.

Patience nodded tightly. “Let’s go back, then. I might have to stop again.” She leaned heavily against him as they made their way back to the coach.

Mercy and Verity had the look of two people on their way to the gallows. Verity raised a hand to her throat. “The sickness could take any of us next.”

They had to stop several times over the first hour of the return journey but eventually, Patience seemed to be well enough to fall back into a doze. Fortunately, the younger Miss Hayes didn’t resume squabbling, and Gilbert found himself drifting to sleep with the motion of the coach.

He woke to hear Verity whispering to Mercy. “I hope my future husband takes care of me as well as Gilbert is taking care of Patience.”

Gilbert smiled to himself and traced a finger along

Patience's arm. He couldn't recall having been commended for taking good care of anyone before, and it felt nice. Perhaps the day had been slightly successful after all.



Patience waited for Gilbert to help her down from the coach while Mercy and Verity dashed off inside. "You don't have to come in," she informed him, tilting her head towards the house. "I'm sure you can't wait to be far away from me." Though she no longer felt queasy, she was tired and probably looked terrible.

Gilbert made an exasperated noise. "Why would you think that? Of course I'm coming inside with you to make sure you're settled, and I haven't lost any desire to be at your side just because you're ill."

Patience let her head drop against Gilbert's chest. "I don't deserve you."

"Probably not," Gilbert agreed. "You deserve someone far better."

"Perhaps we're meant for each other," Patience suggested.

Gilbert raised a hand to cradle her head against his chest. "Do you think so?"

"I'm reasonably certain." Patience was fully aware that she'd ruined his plan to ask her to marry him. Should she give him a little hint that his addresses were still acceptable, or wait for a better day?

She tilted her head until she could see Gilbert's face and his affectionate gaze nearly took her breath away. She wouldn't wait any longer, not when being engaged would make them both abundantly happy. "Do you recall my

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opinion about your marrying?”

“I do,” Gilbert informed her. “But just to be clear, are you merely fond of the idea in general, or did you have someone specific in mind for me?”

Patience shook her head at his teasing. “Of course I mean for you to marry me.”

All playfulness vanished from Gilbert’s manner. “Are you quite sure?”

“Yes,” she assured him. “Are you?”

“Far more than reasonably certain,” Gilbert replied. “You’re the only one for me.” He moved as if to kiss her but then pulled back.

She could hardly take offense at his reluctance to kiss her when she smelled awful. “Shall we go inside and tell everyone the good news?” She would also take the chance to refresh herself.

“One more thing,” Gilbert said, and then reached into his pocket.

“More silhouettes?” Patience quipped.

“I wanted to get you something to mark the occasion,” Gilbert explained. He pulled his hand from his pocket but kept his fist closed so she couldn’t see what was inside.

“Oh?” Gilbert opened his hand to reveal a necklace of seed pearls. “Thank you, I’ll treasure it.”

“I’m sorry it’s not more.” Gilbert wrinkled his nose. “I’m not a rich man. I probably won’t ever be able to provide you with a silk lined traveling coach, or ten yards of chintz.”

Patience blinked at his strangely specific mention of an expensive floral patterned fabric. “I never asked you for those things.”

Gilbert smiled softly. “I can offer you my entire heart. Could you be content with it, do you think?”

“I’ve never desired anything more,” Patience assured him.

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They smiled at each other until Mercy and Verity burst through the front door. "It was the milk!" Verity called.

"Polly says the milk is off," Mercy clarified. "Did you have any?"

"In my coffee." Patience clutched her stomach; the mere mention of food made her feel ill all over again.

"Let's get you inside," Gilbert suggested. He placed an arm under her elbow and solicitously escorted her into the house.

The day might not have gone exactly as planned, but Patience was even more certain than ever that she was making the right choice.

The End