

Four Weddings and a Funeral (1994)

Charles is a confirmed British bachelor and serial monogamist with a colourful romantic background who unexpectedly meets the perfect woman, Carrie at a wedding and falls in love with her. But his inability to express his feelings seems to forestall any possibility of relationship - until they meet again and again.

In the beginning of the film, we see that Charles (Hugh Grant) lives with a flatmate, Scarlett, in London. The pair are habitually late to weddings (as we gather from remarks made by others at the wedding they attend, which is the first wedding in the film). At the wedding, Charles meets Carrie, an American (Andie McDowell) and ends up spending the night with her. Also at the wedding, David (David Bower), the brother of Charles and Scarlett (Charlotte Coleman), is targeted as an object of affection by a guest and that David is hearing impaired. We see that Fiona (Kristin Scott-Thomas) and Tom (James Fleet) are brother and sister and very wealthy and Gareth (Simon Callow) and Matthew (John Hannah) are a gay couple. We also briefly meet Bernard and Lydia who are at the wedding. Bernard (David Haig) likes Lydia (Sophie Thompson), but she dismisses him. As the friends leave the wedding, we see Bernard and Lydia kissing passionately.

Charles ends up spending the night with Carrie and is surprised to see that she is leaving in the morning and returning back to America. The next thing we know, Charles and Scarlett are late again to wedding number 2 in the film, that of Bernard and Lydia.

Charles is elated to see Carrie at the wedding, until she introduces him to her fiancé, a boorish, Scottish politician who is much older than she. To top things off, Charles is stuck at a table with four of his ex girlfriends. The girl who liked David introduces herself to him in faulty sign language and he is enchanted with her. Despite the fact she is engaged, Carrie sleeps with Charles again that evening after her fiancé has gone off to Scotland. We now see that the two really care for one another. Also, there is a very nervous priest (Rowan Atkinson) who seems to be unable to say the names of the bride and groom right.

The interim is when Charles receives an invitation to Carrie's wedding to Hamish Banks (Corin Redgrave) in Scotland. He goes to a very expensive store to choose a gift and meets Carrie. They spend a few hours shopping for her wedding dress and having a drink in a pub where Carrie reveals that she has had 33 lovers. After they part, Charles rushes off to tell Carrie that he loves her, but stops short. Instead, he refers to the "words of David Cassidy" which is the song "I Think I Love You." Carrie is affected, but kisses him on the cheek and moves on.

The next wedding is the third in the film and is that of Carrie and Hamish in Scotland. It is here where Scarlett meets a tall Texan named Chester (Randall Paul) who fancies her. Gareth tells everyone to find spouses for themselves. We find out that Fiona has been in love with Charles since she has known him and she reveals this to the stunned Charles and a table mate. Tragedy strikes when Gareth dies suddenly, presumably of a heart attack, at the wedding.

Now is time for the funeral - that of Gareth. Matthew gives the eulogy, which is the poem "Funeral Blues" by WH Auden. Carrie attends the funeral and sees Charles. Charles and Tom end up talking and Tom says that he is not waiting for the lightning bolt to hit, he just wants to meet someone and settle down.

We then see an invitation for the fourth wedding, Charles and xxx. The audience does not know that he will be marrying Henrietta, his slightly wacky ex-girlfriend who was at weddings 2 and 3. The friends get to the wedding where Tom meets his distant relative while seating the guests and feels "the thunderbolt." Carrie appears at the wedding and tells Charles that she is separated from Hamish and that their timing has been very bad. Charles does not know what to do - he loves Carrie but is now committed to marrying Henrietta (Anna Chancellor).

David, who now is very steady with the young lady who learned sign language is at the wedding along with Scarlet and Chester. When Charles stays in the back of the church and asks Tom to delay the wedding, David wants to know what is going on. He tells Charles that he has three choices - he can go on with the wedding or tell everyone that the wedding is off. He says he can't think of number three.

Charles stands with Henrietta to get married and when the priest asks for objections, David comes up with the third idea. He objects to the wedding. He asks Charles to translate for him and says that the groom loves someone else. When the priest asks if he does love someone else, Charles answers "I do" and gets punched in the eye by the bride. Chaos erupts at the church.

The next scene is in the home of Charles and Scarlett with all the friends present. Carrie comes to the door and Charles, in the rain and outside, finally starts to let some of his feelings out. He asks her if she will agree "not to marry him" for the rest of their lives. Carrie answers "I do."

The song "Going To The Chapel" is then played as we see Henrietta marry a member of the guard, Scarlett marry Chester, David marry his girlfriend, Tom marry the distant relative, Matthew with a new partner (Duncan Kenworthy), Fiona marrying Prince Charles (a joke) and Charles and Carrie with their son, presumably not married.

Cast

Hugh Grant as Charles
Andie MacDowell as Carrie
James Fleet as Tom
Simon Callow as Gareth
John Hannah as Matthew
Kristin Scott Thomas as Fiona
David Bower as David
Charlotte Coleman as Scarlett
Timothy Walker as Angus
Sara Crowe as Laura
Rowan Atkinson as Father Gerald
David Haig as Bernard
Sophie Thompson as Lydia
Corin Redgrave as Sir Hamish Banks
Anna Chancellor as Henrietta ("Duckface")

Short notes on difficult vocabulary

Charles: Any idea who the girl in the black hat is?

Fiona: The name's Carrie.

Charles: Pretty.

Fiona: American.

Charles: Interesting.

Fiona: Slut.

Charles: Really?

Fiona: Used to work at Vogue. Lives in America now. Only gets out with very glamorous people. Quite out of your league.

Charles: Well, that's a relief. Thanks.

slut = puttana; **quite out of our league** = completamente fuori dalla nostra cerchia

[at Gareth's funeral]

Matthew: Gareth used to prefer funerals to weddings. He said it was easier to get enthusiastic about a ceremony one had an outside chance of eventually being involved in. In order to prepare this speech, I rang a few people, to get a general picture of how Gareth was regarded by those who met him. Fat seems to have been a word people most connected with him. Terribly rude also **rang a lot of bells**. So very fat and very rude seems to have been a stranger's viewpoint. (...) Most of all, you tell me of his enormous capacity for joy. When joyful, when joyful for highly **vocal** drunkenness. But I hope joyful is how you will remember him. Not stuck in a **box** in a church. Pick your favourite of his waistcoats and remember him that way. The most splendid, replete, big-hearted, weak-hearted as it turned out, and jolly **bugger** most of us ever met. As for me, you may ask how I will remember him, what I thought of him. Unfortunately there I **run out of** words.

to ring a lot of bells = far venire in mente molte cose; **vocal** = parlare molto (qui: quando si è ubriachi); **box** = (qui) bara; **bugger** = gioco di parole tra bugger come termine per indicare una persona che si finge di disprezzare ma che in realtà piace e bugger come termine volgare per indicare un gay; **to run out of sth** = rimanere senza qc

Charles: Ladies and gentlemen, I'm sorry to **drag** you from your desserts. There are just one or two little things I feel I should say, as **best man**. This is only the second time I've been a best man. I hope I did OK that time. The couple in question are at least still talking to me. Unfortunately, they're not actually talking to each other. The divorce came through a couple of months ago. But I'm assured it had absolutely nothing to do with me. Paula knew Piers had slept with her sister before I mentioned it in the speech. The fact that he'd slept with her mother came as a surprise, but I think was **incidental** to the nightmare of recrimination and violence that became their two-day marriage. Anyway, enough of that. My job today is to talk about Angus. There **are no skeletons in his cupboard**. Or so I thought. I'll come on to that in a minute. I would just like to say this. I am, as ever, in **bewildered awe** of anyone who makes this kind of commitment that Angus and Laura have made today. I know I couldn't do it and I think it's wonderful they can. So, back to Angus and those sheep.

to drag = distrarre; **best man** = testimone (dello sposo); **incidental** = accidentale; **skeletons in one's cupboard** = scheletri nell'armadio; **bewildered** = confuso, socconcertato; **awe** = timore reverenziale

Charles: What **turn off**? Better not be the B359.

Scarlett: It's the B359.

Charles: Fuck it!

turn off = uscita, immissione (in una strada secondaria)

Henrietta: Be serious, Charles. Give people a chance. You don't have to think 'I must get married', but you mustn't start relationships thinking 'I mustn't get married'.

Charles: Most of the time I don't think at all. I just potter along.

Henrietta: Charlie! Oh, God! The way you used to look at me! I just misread it, that's all. I thought you were going to propose and you were just working out how to leave.

to potter along = (qui) andare avanti a caso

[*Carrie asks Charles's opinion on her wedding dress*]

Charles: It is dangerous! You know, there's nothing more off-putting in a wedding than a priest with an enormous erection, yecch!

to off-put = scoraggiare

Gareth: I've got a new theory about marriage. Two people are in love, they live together, and then suddenly one day, they run out of conversation.

Charles: Uh-huh.

Gareth: Totally. I mean they can't think of a single thing to say to each other. That's it: panic! Then suddenly it-it occurs to the chap that there is a way out of the **deadlock**.

Charles: Which is?

Gareth: He'll ask her to marry him.

Charles: Brilliant! Brilliant!

Gareth: Suddenly they've got something to talk about for the rest of their lives.

Charles: Basically you're saying marriage is just a way of getting out of an embarrassing pause in conversation.

Gareth: The definitive icebreaker.

deadlock = impasse; **icebreaker** = modo di rompere il ghiaccio

Charles: Why am I always at, uh, weddings, and never actually getting married, Matt?

Matthew: It's probably 'cause you're a bit scruffy. Or it could also be 'cause you haven't met the right girl.

Charles: Ah, but you see, is that it? Maybe I have met the right girls. Maybe I meet the right girls all the

time. Maybe it's me.
scruffy = trasandato

Young Bridesmaid: What's bonking?

Scarlett: Well, it's kinda like table tennis, only with slightly smaller balls.

bonking = (volg.) scopare

Father Gerald: In the name of the father, the son, and the holy spigot. Spirit!

spigot = zipolo, rubinetto; (qui: gioco di parole tra spigot e spirit per indicare che il prete si confonde. In italiano il prete dice 'spiritoso santo' invece di 'spirito santo')

Father Gerald: In the name of the father, the son and the holy goat. Eh... *ghost*.

goat = (qui) gioco di parole tra *goat*, capra, e *ghost*, spirito

Fiona: [*about congratulating parents of bride and groom*] God, I never know what to say in these ghastly line-ups.

Gareth: It's a cinch! Just give a big warm hug and say the bride looks... pregnant.

Matthew: Or you can stick with convention and say "You must be very proud."

Fiona: Heaven preserve us...

[*in the line*]

Fiona: You must be very proud!

It's a cinch = è facilissimo

Serena: Excuse me?

[*points out Charles's brother, who is talking to Charles in sign language*]

Serena: Who's the boy over there? In the grey?

Matthew: Name's David.

Serena: [*watching David admiringly*] He's something of a dish, isn't he.

Matthew: I've always thought so.

Serena: Why are they... why are they...?

[*mimicking the sign language*]

Matthew: Oh, the dish can't hear.

Serena: Gosh...

Matthew: Yeah. Silent, but deadly attractive.

dish = (coll.) bel bocconcino

Gareth: The castle beckons, I think Tom.

The castle beckons = il castello ci attende

David: How are you doing?

Charles: You remember the time you started dad's boat and the propeller cut my leg to shreds?

David: Yeah?

Charles: This is worse.

propeller = elica (di un'imbarcazione); **to cut to shreds** = fare a pezzetti

Naughty Nicki: I think that was it.

Charles: [*Embarrassed*] I don't remember - maybe I did.

Mocking Martha: Oh, come on Charles! I don't think I've ever been out with anyone less discreet. I remember you going on about this one girl - Helena wasn't it... whose mother made a pass at you...

Vomiting Veronica: I remember this! You couldn't work it out whether or not it'd be impolite not to accept her advances!

Naughty Nicki: Helena was Ms. Piggy! So her mother was Mrs. Piggy!

[all laugh]

Miss Piggy: [*who's been with them the whole time*] We've both lost a lot of weight since then!
to make a pass at sb = fare delle avances a qc

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0109831/>