

WHO WANTS TO BE A PREACHER'S WIFE?

by

Lori B. Crawford

Preacher's Kid Productions  
loribethcrawford@yahoo.com

EXT. COURTHOUSE STEPS - DAY

MADISON HOWARD (31), powerfully elegant tempered with charm, watches as GAIL SINGLETON basks in her FAMILY'S relieved, happy hugs. Husband, JEROME plants a big kiss on what's left of her disfigured lips and grins at Madison.

JEROME

How can we thank you enough?

MADISON

No thanks is necessary.

GAIL

Not necessary? \$58 million is more...

She grasps Madison's hand with her badly mangled ones as tears well up in her eyes. Madison gives her a comforting hug.

Jerome links his fingers with Gail's.

JEROME

Thank you, Madison.

Before he can break down as well, he hustles Gail to the waiting SUV. The family piles in.

Alone, Madison smiles and waves.

INT. COURTHOUSE FOYER - DAY

STEVEN ANDREWS (35), ultra-slick and expensively dressed, stands just inside the entrance watching Madison over his CLIENT'S shoulder.

STEVEN

We'll wire the money today, but I have to advise against it. We can still appeal...

CLIENT

It's only \$58 million. Did you see that woman? Wire the money.

INT. LAW FIRM - CORRIDOR - DAY

PARALEGALS and other ATTORNEYS wait outside an office door.

JOANNE (25), dressed more to hit the clubs than a law firm, presses her ear against the door. Shushes everyone else.

Suddenly, the door opens. BRADSHAW, stern faced, and KERNS, pudgy, escort a dazed Madison out of the office.

Bradshaw authoritatively clears his throat. Silence is immediate.

BRADSHAW

I'd like you all to greet the newest partner in Bradshaw, Kerns and...Howard.

A cheer ripples through the crowd.

Bradshaw half cracks a smile while Kerns' face splits with delighted glee.

Madison looks at her colleagues, speechless.

Joanne throws confetti up. Bradshaw gives her an annoyed look. She shrugs, unrepentant.

INT. LAW FIRM - CONFERENCE ROOM - EVENING

The party is in full swing. Cake and punch flow freely.

Madison steals a glance at her watch between congratulations.

Joanne sidles up to her. Surreptitiously walks her towards the door. Madison gives her a sober look.

MADISON

You know what this means, right?

JOANNE

Just don't assign me to Krutcher and we'll still be friends.

The women glance across the room where KRUTCHER (53), sniffs each bite of cake before eating it.

Madison laughs.

MADISON

You're going to have to deal with him some time. You just jumped a tax bracket.

Joanne's hand freezes on the door knob. She eyes Madison.

JOANNE

I'm not the most experienced...

MADISON  
You really think I'd take this on  
without my right hand?

Joanne squeals and gives Madison a huge hug.

INT. MADISON'S LEXUS SUV - DRIVING - NIGHT

Madison heaves a frustrated sigh as she holds her cell to her ear.

MADISON  
Tell me you're not still at the  
church. Call me the moment you get  
a chance. You aren't going to  
*believe* the day I've had.

She hangs up and turns in the driveway of a quaint house.

INT. FAITH TEMPLE OF GOD - WESLEY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Wesley hangs up his office phone and takes his cell phone off the charger. Hits a speed dial button. Hooks his bluetooth to his ear.

WESLEY  
Okay. I'm not still at the church.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MADISON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Madison sprawls in a big arm chair, bluetooth on her ear. Big grin on her face. Stack of mail on her lap.

MADISON  
Liar.

WESLEY  
So tell me all about this wonderful  
day you've had.

MADISON  
It was...wait a minute. I never  
said anything about wonderful. You  
already know, don't you?

WESLEY  
I'm so proud of you.

MADISON  
How do you find out this stuff?

WESLEY  
Don't worry about it.

Madison frowns.

WESLEY (CONT'D)  
And stop frowning.

MADISON  
Anyway...it was fabulous. The money  
is more than enough to cover Gail's  
reconstructive surgeries.

WESLEY  
Will you get it in time? They could  
appeal forever.

MADISON  
That's the thing. The money was in  
Gail's account before I even got  
back to the office.

WESLEY  
Praise God.

MADISON  
Say that! She can have the first  
surgery immediately.

Wesley smiles as he stands to stretch his legs. Begins  
packing up his briefcase.

WESLEY  
That's so wonderful, Maddie. God is  
still working miracles.

Madison fights tears.

Wesley pauses at the silence.

WESLEY (CONT'D)  
Madison.

MADISON  
Yeah.

WESLEY  
What is it?

He waits for her answer.

MADISON

I'm...just...it's confirmation.  
When you think of ministry, most  
people think what you do. But I'm  
ministering here, Wes. God is using  
me.

Wesley smiles at her answer.

WESLEY

It's a wonderful feeling, isn't it?  
True worship. Laying down your  
plans so God can work His plans  
through you.

MADISON

Yeah, it's...wow.

WESLEY

You sure have a way with words,  
Councilor.

MADISON

You're one to talk, Preacher. I  
seem to recall...

WESLEY

So...um...What did Bradshaw and  
Kerns say? Were they shocked? They  
said the case was a loser from the  
beginning.

Madison grins.

MADISON

They were shocked enough to make me  
partner.

INT. FAITH TEMPLE OF GOD - WESLEY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Wesley drops his keys as he tries to lock the door.

WESLEY

Seriously?

MADISON

You mean you didn't know everything  
after all?

WESLEY

Smarty pants. Tell me everything.

INT. MADISON'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Still on her bluetooth, Madison grabs a bottle of water from the refrigerator. Takes a long drink.

MADISON  
And that's everything.

WESLEY  
This case was some battle.

MADISON  
And now it's over. What's going on with you? How's the new building coming?

INT. WESLEY'S ESCALADE - DRIVING - NIGHT

Wesley rolls his eyes and slumps in the drivers seat.

WESLEY  
Delayed. Again.

MADISON  
Which is why you were still at the church at...two o'clock...in the morning.

WESLEY  
Everything's back on track, now, though. It's just...it couldn't have happened at a worse time.

Wesley climbs out of his vehicle and heads up to his house.

INT. MADISON'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Madison selects a suit from the walk in closet. Drapes it across the ironing board.

MADISON  
Meaning?

WESLEY  
Your dad was there. My dad was there. Rev. Peterson was there. Rev. Carlisle...

MADISON

Ah. The old guard. And Cliff  
was...?

WESLEY

Called away on his own emergency.

MADISON

Oh, Wes. I'm sorry.

WESLEY

It's not your fault they still see  
me as the little kid hanging on  
Daddy's coattails.

Madison pauses in her ironing.

MADISON

Nope. It's yours.

WESLEY

Excuse me.

INT. WESLEY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Wesley savagely yanks off his tie and tosses it across a  
chair.

WESLEY

The congregation has grown 57%  
under my leadership. We're in the  
middle of building a \$25 million  
facility. And yet...They've had  
three years to adjust!

MADISON

On both sides. You've known those  
preachers all your life, too. Have  
you adjusted how you approach them?

Wesley flops on his bed and takes a moment to let that sink  
in.

WESLEY

If I act like a grown up, they'll  
treat me like one. When'd you get  
smarter than me?

MADISON

I always have been. You were just  
too dumb to notice.



WESLEY  
Oh I was, was I?

Madison grins and shrugs.

WESLEY (CONT'D)  
Yeah, I suppose that's why I was  
the one who got my tongue stuck...

MADISON  
I fell.

WESLEY  
How do you fall tongue first on a  
tether ball pole?

MADISON  
I don't have to put up with this  
abuse. I'm hanging up.

Wesley laughs as he pulls on his pajama bottoms and turns  
down the bed.

WESLEY  
Have you finished ironing?

MADISON  
Just now.

Madison unplugs the iron and lets it cool. Turns down her own  
bed.

They both kneel beside their beds.

WESLEY  
Our Father, we humbly come before  
you now with all praise and  
thanksgiving...

INT. MADISON'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Madison rolls over to stare at the ceiling. She looks at the  
lonely expanse of bed and sighs. She shakes it off and gets  
up.

INT. LAW FIRM - MADISON'S OFFICE - DAY

Madison reads a thick file and takes notes.

Joanne opens the door to bring in a huge bouquet of roses.

Madison barely looks up, then does a double take.

MADISON  
What's all this?

Joanne leaves the office without a word.

Madison gets up to look for the card.

Joanne returns with another huge bouquet.

JOANNE  
The card's in this one.

Madison digs it out. Reads.

MADISON  
Keep celebrating. Love Wes.

JOANNE  
That man adores you.

Madison shrugs and tucks the card in her purse.

MADISON  
We're just friends. Don't go  
getting any ideas.

Joanne nods at the flowers.

JOANNE  
I didn't have to go. They marched  
right up to me in the arms of the  
cutest delivery man EVER! Hmmmmp.  
Hang around you long enough and  
I'll have gorgeous men sending me  
flowers, too.

MADISON  
(laughs)  
Do not ever tell him that. It took  
Momma G and me the latter part of  
his teens and most of his twenties  
to disabuse him of that notion.

Joanne laughs as she leaves.

Madison stares wistfully at the roses. Plays with her bare  
left ring finger. She shakes her head and determinedly  
focuses on the case file in front of her.

INT. LAW FIRM - PARKING GARAGE - EVENING

Madison heads for her SUV. Her steps hesitate as she spots Steven leaning against her driver side door.

MADISON

Mr. Andrews. The case is over.  
Aren't you glad to see the back of  
me?

STEVEN

The front ain't too shabby, either.

MADISON

That is completely inappropriate  
and unwanted.

He blinks, but quickly feigns hurt.

STEVEN

I didn't mean to offend. You have  
to know you are a beautiful woman.

MADISON

I see.

Steven stares deeply into her eyes.

STEVEN

Do you? See how much you intrigue  
me, I mean?

Madison leans closer. Lowers her voice seductively to match his.

MADISON

What I see is...an agenda. What is  
it you think you can charm out of  
me, Mr. Andrews?

STEVEN

I'd thought we agreed to drop the  
formalities.

Madison turns to head back inside the office building. He grabs her hand.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Wait. I'm sorry. It's just...

Stares at her pleadingly.

STEVEN (CONT'D)  
This is so...difficult.

MADISON  
What is difficult?

STEVEN  
Asking...for your help.

He begins caressing her hand subtly and gives her a big, helpless doe-eyed expression.

MADISON  
Does that actually work on anyone?

Steven withdraws his hand and steps back to study her. His face becomes expressionless as he tries to regroup.

MADISON (CONT'D)  
And there he is. The real Steven Andrews. At least the one he'll allow us to see.

STEVEN  
Perhaps this wasn't such a good idea...

MADISON  
Here's a novel idea. Why don't you just...ask me?

STEVEN  
(smirks)  
What? Just like that?

MADISON  
Just like that.

Steven studies her for a long moment. Madison patiently lets him.

STEVEN  
Can I buy you drink? There's a cozy little bar over on...

MADISON  
There's a well lit restaurant across the street.

STEVEN  
That's a little too...public.

MADISON

Exactly.

STEVEN

What I want to discuss  
is...sensitive.

Madison studies his earnest expression.

MADISON

There's a cafe on the corner...

STEVEN

Perfect.

INT. TRINI'S CAFE - NIGHT

Madison and Steven sit at a table near the back of the almost empty cafe. Paperwork and files are stacked between them.

MADISON

They're trying to pull a fast one.

STEVEN

That's what I thought, too. But I  
can't figure it out. Everything  
looks legit.

Madison frowns and picks up a file from the table they've pulled up.

MADISON

'Cause it's not just one. You're  
going to need a team on this.

STEVEN

We can't put a team on a loser like  
this. And I'm usually the guy on  
the other side.

MADISON

So how is it you got stuck with it?  
Not because of...

STEVEN

No. Nothing like that.  
Surprisingly. But I...the  
client...he camped out in our  
lobby. The only way to get him to  
leave was to look at the case.

Madison studies Steven with a smile small.

He glances up at her. Frowns.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

He just looked so pathetic. He was dropping the value of the place.

MADISON

So why bring this to me? I can't take this case.

STEVEN

You're the queen of the little guy. You cut through my bullshit without even breaking a sweat. I'm hoping you can help me do that here.

Madison studies him a moment longer. She starts packing up the files.

MADISON

Guidance only. I have a huge case backlog. I can't give you more than that.

STEVEN

(grins)

As long as we can meet once in a while. I work best when I have a sexy woman nearby.

Madison cocks an eyebrow his direction as she stands.

MADISON

These little comments could easily become a deal breaker.

STEVEN

I'm sorry. I'll behave. I promise.

Madison studies him for moment.

MADISON

Go interview his roommates again.

STEVEN

Why? They're not even relevant.

MADISON

They're not telling the truth either. Their statements sound far too similar. Call me when you're finished.

She heads for the door. Steven hurriedly grabs up the files and springs after her.

STEVEN  
I'll walk you back to your car.

Madison gives him a surprised look.

STEVEN (CONT'D)  
What? Perhaps underneath the  
leering exterior lurks the heart of  
a true gentleman.

Madison fights her smile. Allows him to open the door for her. He checks out her butt as she exits.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Steven takes his time catching up to her. Enjoys the view.

Madison rolls her eyes up.

MADISON  
You know I can see you in the  
window.

Steven looks at their reflection in the storefront. He shrugs unrepentant and falls into step beside her.

STEVEN  
Can't blame a guy for looking.

MADISON  
Yeah. I can.

STEVEN  
What do you want from me? I'm a  
healthy, red-blooded American male.

MADISON  
A little respect would be nice.

Steven takes her elbow. Turns her to face him.

STEVEN  
I do respect you. I've never seen a  
lawyer quite like you. You're...  
amazing.

MADISON  
I'm not...really. It's just...

A car slams on its brakes. Skids to a halt just inches from the tail of a car who ran the red light.

Madison reflexively grabs Steven's arm.

MADISON (CONT'D)  
Oh, sweet Jesus.

STEVEN  
(snorts)  
He's probably busy. If he existed,  
I mean.

Madison turns her attention back on Steven.

MADISON  
What do you mean if?

STEVEN  
(groans)  
Oh don't tell me you're some kind  
of religious zealot.

MADISON  
And if I am?

STEVEN  
Nothing. I just don't feel like  
getting into some irrational  
religious debate. Not tonight. And  
not with you.

MADISON  
Why not me?

STEVEN  
You just kicked my ass in court.  
Where there're rules. I shudder to  
think what you'd do to me on a  
street corner.

They continue walking. Madison deep in her own thoughts.  
Leaving Steven to his.

INT. LAW FIRM - PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Steven holds the door for Madison to climb inside.

MADISON  
How far away are you parked? Do you  
need a ride?



STEVEN

Oh. So you're not giving me the silent treatment.

MADISON

No. Why would I?

STEVEN

I just thought...After what I said...

MADISON

Care to narrow it down? Between the sexual innuendos and the name calling I've lost track.

She can't hold on to her grin.

He heaves a relieved sigh.

STEVEN

So our deal is still on?

MADISON

It's still on. Although I did think of something you could do for me.

Steven smirks.

STEVEN

I can think of a lot of things I could do to you.

MADISON

You're not going to even try to control those comments are you?

STEVEN

What?

MADISON

No matter. They'd probably work in my favor anyway.

STEVEN

What are you talking about?

MADISON

If you say no, I'll understand. And I'll still help you with your case. But I'm hoping you won't because I'll have to find someone else. And you're...well...perfect.

Steven straightens his spine importantly.

STEVEN

The lady thinks I'm perfect. What am I'm perfect for?

Madison gives him an innocent smile.

MADISON

To marry me.

Steven takes a huge step back.

STEVEN

Whoa, now. I knew you was too good to be true.

MADISON

Not for real. I have a little...say...experiment I want to run. I need a fake fiancé to do it.

He eyes her warily.

STEVEN

This isn't some kind of trap is it?

MADISON

For you? No. After we're done, you'll be free to go on your merry little way.

INT. UNIVERSITY GYMNASIUM - AFTERNOON

A huge banner proclaims: Welcome to the 23rd Annual All-State Science Competition.

PARENTS, ELEMENTARY STUDENTS and JUDGES all bustle around rows and rows and rows of science projects.

Wesley strolls through the booths.

MOTHERS, single and not-so-single, all take notice of him. The more bold ones stare without shame.

Wesley stops by a booth announcing COLD FUSION with a huge blue ribbon hanging on the side. He beams proudly.

An attractive WOMAN slides over to the booth.

WOMAN

Cold fusion. Wow. That's quite advanced for elementary students, isn't it?

WESLEY

It's quite advanced for adults. I don't have a clue what it's about and I've been lugging this thing around for weeks.

LARRY GERARD (10), a miniature version of Wesley, pops his head out from under the booth.

LARRY

Dad. It's...  
(sighs)  
Nevermind.

He ducks back under the table.

The mercury in a thermometer begins to inch upward.

Larry pops out completely. Dusts his hands off.

LARRY (CONT'D)

That should get it.

WOMAN

You're quite the little scientist aren't you?

Larry starts to smile at the compliment until he sees her glance slyly at Wesley. Larry rolls his eyes instead.

Wesley's cell phone RINGS. He looks at the display.

WESLEY

I've got to take this. Why don't you explain your project to her?

Wesley moves off a little ways.

Panic settles on the woman's face.

Larry gets a devilish glint in his eye and starts explaining in great detail.

Wesley frowns, absorbed in the phone call.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

You want me to do what? In your what?!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MADISON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Madison sighs and rolls her eyes. Flops on her couch.

MADISON

You're always so over dramatic., I want this wedding to be drama-free.

WESLEY

You have the nerve to ask me to be in your wedding when I didn't even know you were seeing anyone and I'm causing drama?

MADISON

Okay, okay. Point taken. I'm seeing someone. Now will you be in the wedding?

Wesley lurches towards the bleachers, looking very pale. He sits heavily. Injects some cheer in his voice.

WESLEY

Of course I'll be in your wedding party. Like you'd have to ask.

MADISON

What are you doing? You sound funny.

WESLEY

Just so much good news. Larry just took first prize in the state science fair.

MADISON

That's wonderful. Give him a big kiss for me and tell him congrats.

WESLEY

When is this wedding supposed to happen? To get my schedule cleared and all.

MADISON

Six weeks.

WESLEY

Six weeks? Are you nuts? What's the rush?

MADISON

We're in love. That's the rush.

Wesley struggles to breathe. Not hearing another thing  
Madison says.