

Carey Thomas, an application administrator at Spectra Energy, planned an entire wedding for his unsuspecting fiancé



SURPRISE! *It's Your Wedding Day*

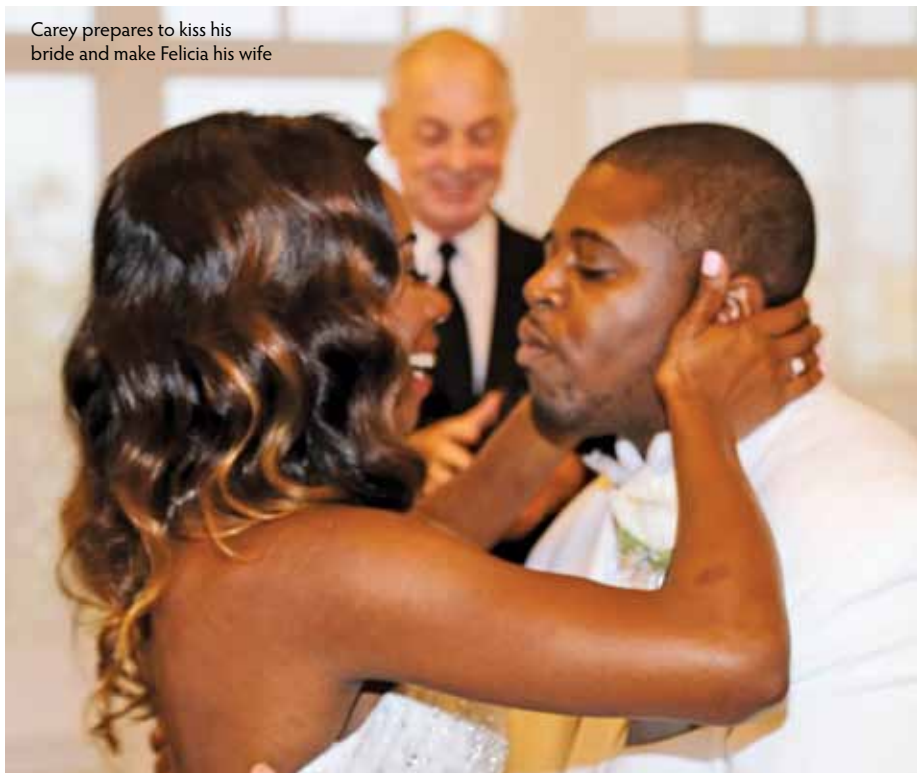
Carey Thomas pulls off a surprise wedding
for his awestruck Katy fiancé

Written by Clare Jensen and Katrina Katsarelis | Photography by Dare to Dream Photography

Carey Thomas, 35, first got the idea of planning a surprise wedding early in 2014, after seeing his girlfriend's enthusiastic reaction to a surprise wedding on YouTube. With a lot of sneaky planning and the help of a handful of accomplices, Carey was able to pull off an entire wedding and reception that took place on August 2 at Noah's, a large event venue in Katy.



The newly married couple greet their guests at the reception.



Carey prepares to kiss his bride and make Felicia his wife

The Surprise of a Lifetime

The unsuspecting bride, Felicia Thompson, was having a casual lunch with her girlfriend who then needed to run by a place called Noah's for a quick errand. "When we went inside, I was none the wiser," explains Felicia, who had never heard of Noah's at the time. "We entered a room off the first corridor, and then my fiancé came out of the adjoining room fully dressed in his tux." Carey got down on one knee and asked Felicia to marry him again, only that day. "I was in a state of awe - I couldn't believe this was happening to me." Felicia's mother entered the room with a wedding dress, and later, her sisters and girlfriends, who would serve as her bridesmaids. Most of the guests were just as surprised to learn it was actually a wedding, having been sent invitations to Felicia's 30th surprise birthday party.

Through the Eyes of His Bride

Carey says he planned the entire wedding through the eyes of Felicia. He remembered the many conversations about her favorite wedding colors (black, white, silver gray), and her love of glitz, glam, and bling. He recalled even the smallest details she had said she wanted in her bouquet. He also incorporated her love of chandeliers into the reception room. And what was most special of all, he made sure their daughter Naya, age 7, was the surprise flower girl.

Finding the Wedding Gown

Earlier that summer, Felicia's mother had persuaded her to go wedding dress shopping as a fun mother-daughter activity. In order to keep up the charade, Carey downplayed the whole wedding dress thing; acting mildly disinterested and told her

to put it away until the date was picked. "I didn't see the dress until I was standing at the altar waiting for her," says Carey. "I cried when I saw her. She looked so stunning!"

Perseverance and Fibs

Carey says the one thing that bothered him was having to tell so many little fibs to pull off the months of planning. "I would record videos to tell her about my experiences while planning the wedding and apologize for lying. It made me feel better about the whole thing," he admits. Despite several obstacles and a few naysayers, Carey was determined to pull off his plan. "Having everyone tell you something won't work is a bit disconcerting," says Carey, who just shook off the negative comments and kept on going.

The Bride's Reaction

For Felicia, the day was "like a fairy tale," and she says she was incredibly touched by how much Carey thought of so many special details: a stunning venue, delicious food, photography, music, and even a montage video from those who couldn't attend. "I look back and am still in shock that a man could love me so much to pull this off and that all these people loved me enough to be a part of it. I am the luckiest girl in the world because of how much I am loved." **KM**

CLARE JENSEN is a senior at Rice University majoring in English and history. She calls Katy her home, and enjoys keeping in touch with the community.

HOW HE PULLED IT OFF!

- Had the bride's mom take her shopping for bridal gowns well in advance of the planning
- Told the bride he was planning a lot of surprises for her 30th birthday to distract her
- Sent local guests invitations to her surprise 30th birthday celebration
- Flew in the bride's extended family from New York on the sly
- Told the bride to pack a big overnight bag for a special birthday trip to Austin
- Entered the room in a tux, got down on one knee, and asked her to marry him that day

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Felicia thought she was grabbing lunch with a friend when she was surprised with her dream wedding



Everything was planned from the bouquet to the wedding cake



Carey made sure family and friends from New York made it for the big day

Felicia's mom, privy to the surprise, and convinced her to shop for a dress while she was in town visiting during the spring



Carey planned the entire reception based on Felicia's preferences



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