

Lily Dodge
lilyldodge@gmail.com
WORK SAMPLE
Genre: Clean Romance

TITLE: Fate's Fashion
WORDCOUNT: 30-40k words
GENRE: Clean Romance

Part 1: Characters

Female Protagonist: Cassie Halloran

General History

- Cassie owns a small bridal shop called Blushing Bride Beadwork in the coastal town of Half Moon Bay, California. She's known for her intricate hand beading work and the care she takes with all her clients.
- Recently, a new developer bought the small shopping center where her storefront is located, and the rent is about to increase significantly. Cassie is at risk of losing her life's work if she can't come up with the money to renew her lease.
- Cassie doesn't want to leave Half Moon Bay - her shop and the few friends she's made with her clients are all she has. She was raised as an only child by a single mom who died when she was a teenager. Cassie is used to being on her own, but if she has to leave Half Moon Bay, she'll be completely adrift.

Physical Appearance

- Cassie has blonde hair that she wears in loose shoulder length curls, and grey-blue eyes that people often comment "look like the ocean."
- Because she works in the fashion industry, Cassie needs to look trendy and fashionable, but she has an understated style. Her style icons would be Coco Chanel or Jackie O.
- To maintain her image on her limited budget, Cassie is constantly shopping at the local thrift and consignment store, Second Chances. She is close friends with the owner, Alison Carth, who knows her tastes and often puts cool things aside for her.

Personality Traits

- Cassie is sweet, always willing to lend a helping hand. She often works with brides who otherwise couldn't afford her work, accepting things in trade rather than cash.
- Cassie is very lonely, though she wouldn't easily admit it. It's hard for her to spend all day talking about other people's weddings while being without a partner herself.

Lily Dodge
lilyldodge@gmail.com
WORK SAMPLE
Genre: Clean Romance

Male Protagonist: Zachary Neilson

General History

- Zachary has lived in Half Moon Bay his whole life, and comes from a huge blended family with lots of siblings, cousins, step-siblings and half-siblings.
- Zachary is a software engineer who mostly works from his beachfront studio but sometimes commutes to San Francisco. He has deep ties to the area, and would never consider leaving.
- Three years ago, Zachary was engaged to a woman, an artist who shared his love of the ocean. She died in a boating accident just a few months before their wedding.

Physical Appearance

- Zachary has black hair that he lets flop into his eyes, and black-rimmed glasses over hazel eyes.
- Zachary dresses very casually, since he usually works from home and likes to take breaks to walk on the beach, but as Cassie finds out when his family hosts a fancy dinner at a local seafood restaurant, cleans up very handsomely.

Personality traits

- Zachary is shy and soft spoken, and people often joke that he prefers the company of computers. He tends to leave the class-clown type antics to his older brothers.
- Zachary remembers his dead fiance fondly, but after spending a year in deep grief, has decided that for her sake he has to heal and move on.
- Zachary believes in fairness and hates the way big tech and powerful developers have started to squeeze the inhabitants of Half Moon Bay.

Other Characters:

Alison Carth: Alison owns the thrift store, Second Chances, in the same shopping center as Blushing Bride Beadwork. She's a good friend of Cassie's and they often chat during lunch.

Julia Wenbrook: Primary antagonist. Zachary's step-sister who tries to sue Cassie for her prize money after her beaded dress wins a bridal show. Selfish and manipulative, never got along with Zachary or his fiance.

Lily Dodge
lilyldodge@gmail.com
WORK SAMPLE
Genre: Clean Romance

Christopher Albert: A local lawyer trying to help Cassie sort out the lawsuit after she helped him and his wife with their wedding. He is technically a tax lawyer, but is willing to help her out in court.

Jeremy & Kara Neilson: Zachary's older brother and his wife. Both are loud, boisterous, and love to host get togethers at their home and the art gallery Kara manages.

Part 2: Plot Summary

SHORT SUMMARY:

Cassie is a dress maker in Half Moon Bay known for her custom, elaborate beadwork that she does by hand. A few years ago, she got a commission for a really gorgeous wedding dress, but the bride never showed back up to get it or pay for it. Cassie loved the design so she has been working on it over the years, making adjustments and turning it into the perfect wedding dress for herself. It's her magnum opus, but she's not sure she'll ever get a chance to wear it.

When Cassie finds out that her storefront has been purchased by a large commercial developer, she needs to come up with \$20k in order to renew her lease and keep her store. Unable to find the money anywhere else, she decides to enter her dress in a big bridal show in San Francisco, which offers a grand prize of \$25k.

After she wins, Cassie is served with a lawsuit from Julia Wenbrook. Julia is claiming that she actually deserves the prize, because she was friends with the bride who initially commissioned it and helped contribute to the design. Cassie ends up needing to go to court to argue against this lawsuit. While waiting outside the courtroom, she meets Zachary, a handsome and soft-spoken man who asks her out.

Cassie and Zachary begin dating. Zachary comes from a big friendly family who instantly embraces Cassie and makes her feel like she's part of a family for the first time since her mother died. She becomes friendly with Zachary's brother, Jeremy, and his wife Kara, at a beachside barbeque. Kara even invites her to show her dresses at the art gallery Kara runs in a nearby town.

After seeing a document from her lawyer, which lists the witnesses that Julia plans to call. Cassie sees Zachary's name on the list and finds out that Zachary is Julia's step brother and was actually engaged to the woman who commissioned the dress before she died. Cassie confronts Zachary about this, accusing him of keeping secrets from her, and they break up.

Lily Dodge
lilyldodge@gmail.com
WORK SAMPLE
Genre: Clean Romance

The next time Cassie sees Zachary, he's on the stand in court. But instead of answering the questions the way Julia expects him to, he starts showing the court texts and notes from his dead fiance, where she complains that Julia keeps trying to claim credit for her design, even though she and Zachary worked on it together. The judge determines that since Zachary is the only living person able to claim credit for the dress's design, the prize money is his. Cassie storms out, in tears.

Later, Zachary goes by Cassie's shop to apologize - and deliver the money. He thinks she deserves it, since she too the dress's design and made it so much more incredible, but he couldn't find her after court. He explains that he wanted to tell her who he was, but worried she wouldn't want to be with him if she knew about his tragic past, and he felt shy about bringing it up.

Cassie and Zachary make up and begin dating. Fast forward to their engagement and wedding, during which Cassie looks absolutely stunning in her dress.

CORE CONFLICTS:

The core conflicts of the series are designed around three points:

- Cassie's loneliness and her struggles to keep her bridal shop afloat
- Julia's attempts to legally steal the prize money from Cassie
- Zachary keeping an important secret from Cassie

STAKES: What the protagonist could lose and what is at stake with regards to the conflict.

- Cassie stands to lose her shop, which is her life's work and her anchor to Half Moon Bay
- Cassie stands to lose her relationship with Zachary, who loves her and supports her business

EVENTS:

Inciting event:

Cassie learns that she is at risk of losing her bridal shop and having to move out of Half Moon Bay, where she's started to make friends and build a business. After she wins the money she needs in a bridal show competition, she is immediately served with papers claiming that the money belongs to someone else, a woman named Julia Wenbrook.

Act one climax:

Lily Dodge
lilyldodge@gmail.com
WORK SAMPLE
Genre: Clean Romance

Cassie finds out that Zachary is actually involved somehow with the case against her, and that he withheld information from her about his fiance's death.

Midpoint reversal:

Julia Wenbrook approaches Cassie, pretending to feel sorry for her and offering a settlement that leaves Cassie with almost nothing. Cassie starts thinking that she might have to leave Half Moon Bay anyway, saying goodbye to her best friend Alison and talking with her lawyer about how she might be able to pay his fees without winning the money.

Act two climax:

While on the stand in court, Zachary proves that Julia has no right to the dress design. The judge awards him the money instead.

Denouement:

Zachary brings Cassie the money, apologizing for not telling her about his past or his connection to Julia. He explains that he thinks she deserves the money, since the dress is truly her work, and compliments her work ethic and success as a small business owner, especially as someone who did it mostly alone. They make up and get back together, eventually holding a gorgeous beachside wedding where she finally gets to wear her perfect dress.

Part 3: The Plot

Cassie is working hard at her artisan bridal gown shop, helping out excited new brides and doing custom beadwork. In her down time, she works on her magnum opus - a dress that started out as a client commission, but when the client never came back to claim it and she couldn't get ahold of anyone involved with the wedding, she took it on as her own project. It's slowly becoming the most incredible thing she's ever made, and it would be perfect for her - if she ever got married. Her best friend, Alison, visits during her lunch break to bring Cassie some vintage pearls that just arrived in her consignment shop. On her way in, Alison notices a note taped to the door and brings it inside. Cassie reads the note and is devastated to learn that she'll need to come up with \$20,000 within 30 days or lose her lease on the storefront. Alison asks if she has any family she can borrow from, but Cassie is alone in this world - her mother died when she was a teenager, and she doesn't have any other family. Alison would help, but she and her husband are barely keeping the consignment shop afloat themselves. *Cliffhanger: How will Cassie come up with the money? Will she lose everything?*

Lily Dodge
lilyldodge@gmail.com
WORK SAMPLE
Genre: Clean Romance

Cassie receives a flyer for a prestigious bridal show in San Francisco, where designers can enter their hand made dresses for the chance at being awarded cash prizes. Alison convinces her to bring her custom dress. Together, the two drive to the big city and attend the show, where all day long women gush over Cassie's display and ask for her information. They notice one sour-faced woman hanging around and looking at her dress, but they don't pay her much attention. At the end of the day, the winners are announced, and Cassie has won Best In Show - the \$25,000 prize! She and Alison get drinks to celebrate at the bar in the swanky hotel where the bridal show is being held. But then a young man comes up, asks if one of them is Cassie Halloran, then serves her papers - she's being sued for her prize money and accused of using someone else's design!
Cliffhanger: Who is suing Cassie? Can Cassie defend herself?

Alison reminds Cassie about the wedding she did last year for the two lawyers, so she calls them up. Only the husband has courtroom experience, though he's more skilled in tax law - but he agrees to help her. They go down for a preliminary hearing, during which they discover that they're being sued by a woman named Julia Wenbrook. She claims that she was best friends with the woman who commissioned the dress and died before she was able to wear it. Dramatically, Julia says that she helped her friend design the dress, and that it's a dishonor to her beloved artist's friend's memory to give some dressmaker credit for it. Cassie wants to argue, but her lawyer says now isn't the time; the judge is just deciding whether to hear the case. The judge does, and another hearing is set for three months later. As Cassie is leaving the courthouse, she runs into a handsome man named Zachary, who says he's there for some family business. He asks Cassie out.
Cliffhanger: Will Cassie win the lawsuit? And who is this handsome man?

Zachary and Cassie begin dating. Cassie gets to know his big, boisterous family - his parents divorced when he was a kid and both remarried to people who suit them much better, and the blended family is full of half- and step-siblings. Cassie gets to know a number of them, since they're always hanging out at each other's places, having bonfires on the beach or grilling up fish. Everyone is instantly welcoming to Cassie, and she feels like she belongs. This makes it even more heartbreaking that she may not be able to stay in Half Moon Bay if she can't keep her storefront open. But as she is falling deeper in love with Zachary, she also meets with her lawyer. He shows her the witness list Julia plans to call, and there on the list is Zachary's name.
Cliffhanger: What does Zachary have to do with the case? Will this destroy their relationship and lose Cassie her prize money?

Cassie confronts Zachary and learns that he is Julia's step-sister and was engaged to the woman whose dress it was. Zachary says that at first, he had no idea that it was the same case, since Julia doesn't talk to the rest of the family that much. And when he realized, he just didn't know how to bring it up. He apologizes, but Cassie is too upset, and she breaks up with him. When she talks to Alison about it, Alison is enraged and thinks Cassie did the right thing. But when she talks to Kara, Kara says that Zachary was incredibly distraught after his fiance died and didn't really talk

Lily Dodge

lilyldodge@gmail.com

WORK SAMPLE

Genre: Clean Romance

to anyone for a whole year. She says that it's still hard for him to talk about her, and that he probably didn't want to mess things up with Cassie. Cassie has to go to court the next day for the main trial hearing. Julia puts Zachary on the stand and starts questioning him - but he starts showing texts from his fiance where she talks about how Julia is trying to weasel her way into the dress design and claim credit, when really it was just her work with some input from Zachary. The judge determines that since Julia argued so well that the dress designer, not creator, has the rights to the prize money, and since Zachary is the person alive who had the most input into the design, the money is his. Cassie, in shock over losing everything, leaves the courthouse in a rush. Later, she's packing up her shop with Zachary comes by. He gives her the prize money, saying that she deserves it, and he's sure his fiance would have wanted her to have it if she could see what an amazing job she did making the dress something so special. Cassie decides to make up with Zachary and stay in Half Moon Bay.

One year later, Cassie and Zachary are getting married on the beach. Cassie looks absolutely stunning in her perfect dress. Alison, Jeremy, and Kara are all there to celebrate. Julia is nowhere to be seen.