

PLANNING THE FANTASY WEDDING

"You're the only one for me," Barbie says, trying to bend her arms enough to hug Ken. They're getting married in only a month, and Barbie's confident she's made the right choice. Because she's blond, she chose the dark haired male fashion doll as her husband-to-be. Skipper wants silk roses in her flower-girl bouquet, so Barbie has to remember to call the florist to change her order. The photographer is paid in installments, which is considerate, but Barbie has to mark in her day book when to send in the checks. She doesn't want Ken to throw her garter, sure he will degrade all the women at the reception in the process, but try to tell that to the deejay who thinks the gesture is funny and cute. He insists if Ken doesn't throw the garter, the guests will feel ripped off. The bridesmaids' gowns finally fit the bridesmaids, but now their shoes have to be dyed—and Barbie has chosen a hard fantasy color, watermelon, that sometimes comes out too light or too dark. The baker won't put the fresh flowers on the cake unless they're arranged on a ring, so Barbie has to call the florist again. Should the pew bows go on every other row? Will they be too gaudy if there are too many? Will Barbie and Ken look cheap if they skip? The premarital counseling is next week, with the minister who will ask them questions, trying to find their fundamental differences, and remind them that married life is not always a bed of roses. Barbie's gown has to be altered, at the hem and the sleeves. It's at least three trips—an unaltered fitting, a busting, then full stitches. The seamstress

has already had to cancel once because of problems with her ex-husband which leaves a funny feeling in Barbie's stomach. Barbie and Ken finally find traditional matching rings, that aren't etched or brushed with a 90's mall look. She makes her nail appointment for the day before the wedding and the manicurist reminds her to be careful of her hands between now and then. She has to get up at six the day of the ceremony to have her hair curled into a bun and to starch her veil so it puffs out enough. She had to hire a second pianist because the first one didn't know all the music. She has to call the honeymoon hotels and reserve rooms with her Visa. She has to pick up the airline tickets and find a good restaurant for the rehearsal dinner. She and Ken had to look through the minister's prayer books deciding the format of the mass. They weren't sure whether to have communion, who of their guests would partake. The replies come back so slowly, Barbie complains. Her friends on the phone say they'll be there, but never send their RSVPs. The friends who write they are coming call back later to cancel with all kinds of excuses. Some want to let her know at the last minute. Others say it depends on the price of air fare or the health of their babies or cats. At breakfast, Barbie finds herself snippy because of something small that Ken says. As she times her hard boiled eggs, the pressure mounts. She cries out her wish—that all she had left to do was to look good in a rented tux.