The Decision

Stephanie Woodward
St. John Fisher College
The Decision

Abstract
In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"Oh shit. That was her only thought when she saw him pull that little velour covered box out of his pocket and get down on one knee in front of her. They had been in Italy for thirteen days, traveling from city to city, touring the country, and staying at the finest hotels. This, he said, was his gift to her 'just because.'"

Cover Page Footnote

This prose is available in The Angle: https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol2008/iss2/19
THE DECISION

BY STEPHANIE WOODWARD

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Oh man, she thought as she looked down at him, close to the edge of the cliff overlooking the Mediterranean, where they had just been stargazing, I should have seen this coming!

She knew what he was about to ask, anyone in the world would know what he was about to ask; however, the only problem was no one could know how she would answer him. She didn’t even know how to answer him.

“Baby, you know I love you…” he began.

She was barely listening to him. Her thoughts took over in those mere seconds that she had before she would have to reply.

Why?! Why me!? Why now?! she screamed in her mind. Attempting to calm herself, she tried to think logically about the situation.

I know he has more than enough money to support both of us for a thousand years, but I don’t want that. I never wanted that. I have my own dreams of making my own money. I have plans! I’ve already planned out my whole life and this just isn’t in the plan! How will I finish my last year of school? How will I start my own successful
business? How am I supposed to make it big if I’m tied down? I don’t want to be a housewife. I didn’t dream my whole life about being a housewife!

His speech couldn’t last forever, and she knew this. She felt the question getting closer as her mind sped forward.

But he would never ask me to be a housewife. He knows I have dreams. He would help me with them… if I let him. I told him the very first day I met him that his money would never impress me. I told him I would have my own money someday, and lots of it. He’s always supported me in everything I’ve ever done. He’s always been there. And it’s not like I’d have to get married tomorrow! I could finish school.

She tried to weigh out the pros and cons, but her mind kept going to one place: her dreams. Not her dreams that she has now, not her dreams that follow the specific plans she has made, but rather, her dreams she had since she was a little girl. Her dreams of being happy with the one person she loved and would never want to live without, her dreams of raising a family with a man who would love her and their children as much as her father loved her family. She could not deny that the man looking up at her right now was the man that belonged in all of those dreams. She could not deny how much she loved him.

But still, he has dreams of his own: dreams she has never desired. He dreams of going to a third world country and helping the people there by teaching them how to support themselves.
Those are beautiful dreams, she thought, but my dreams require me to stay here. I don’t want to start a business in Africa. I want to follow my dreams, and I don’t want to get in the way of his –

Her thought was interrupted as she heard him conclude with:

I know we both had our own dreams, but the way I see it is that we could each chase our dreams separately; or together, we could make new dreams.

And with that one sentence, her decision was made.