8. Family Life

Charlie's first marriage was at the age of twenty-nine to a sixteen-year-old actress. His first three marriages lasted only fourteen years altogether. Each time he married an actress much younger than himself, yet it seemed that he would never find the right person. Then, when Charlie was working on a picture called Shadow and Substance, he needed an actress to play the part of 'Bridget,' the principal character. One day a Hollywood agent Charlie knew well telephoned to say that she had found someone for the part. The actress's name was Oona O'Neill, and she was the daughter of the famous playwright Eugene O'Neill.

"Can she act?" asked Charlie. He knew that O'Neill's plays were very serious, so he imagined Oona as being rather dull.

"She has had a little theatrical experience," said the agent. "You had better take a film test of her. Or else come to my house for dinner and I'll invite her too."

When they met, Charlie found Oona gentle and beautiful. She also had a special charm that appealed to him very much. She was only seventeen, but he quickly signed her up for the part in the picture. As Charlie got to know her, he was always surprised by her sense of humour and tolerance. Besides there were many other nice things about her, and it was not long before he fell in love with her. Oona was much younger than Charlie, but she also felt very strongly about him so they decided to get married, thus beginning thirty-four years of happiness together.

They were married at Carpinteria, a quiet little village about fifteen miles outside Santa Barbara, California, in 1943, when Charlie was fifty-four. On the day of their marriage, they had to go to Santa Barbara town hall to register. They went at eight o'clock in the morning, when all was quiet in the town. Oona went in alone to register while Charlie waited outside. He knew there is a special button under the register clerk's desk. When a famous person comes to get married, the clerk pushes the button to notify the newspapers. Then all the reporters come running. Charlie wanted his wedding to be very quiet.

After taking down the usual details, her name and age, the clerk said: "Now where's the young man?" When Charlie appeared his eyes opened up wide. "Well, this is a surprise!" he exclaimed, and his hand disappeared under the counter. Charlie and Oona asked him to hurry. They wanted to get out of there as soon as possible. Meanwhile the clerk did everything as slowly as he could, hoping the reporters would arrive before they left. In the end, though, the licence was ready and he had to give it to them.

Charlie and Oona quickly left the building and got into their car. Just as they were about to leave, the Press arrived in their cars. From then on it was a race for life. Early in the morning the streets of Santa Barbara were deserted. The cars raced up and down the streets, turning corners suddenly, their brakes and engines making a big noise. In this way Charlie and Oona finally succeeded in escaping the Pressmen, and made their way to Carpinteria. There they were quietly married. This was Charlie's last marriage, and his longest and his happiest.

EXERCISES (8)

Ａ　（　）に適切な日本語を入れ、本文のあらすじを完成させなさい．

チャーリーの（ア　　 ）度の結婚はいずれも破局をむかえていた．ある日、映画の（イ　 　　 ）をさがしていたチャーリーは、有名な（ウ　 　 ）の娘、ウーナ・オニールを紹介された．女優としてだけではなく、人間としての魅力に引かれた彼は、1943年、結婚を決意した．

　ふたりは（エ　 　　 ）に知られずに静かに挙式することを望んだが、（オ　　　　）によって知らされてしまい、朝の（カ　　　　　　　　　　　）でカーチェイスをくりひろげる．しかし、何とか逃れ、（キ　　　　　　　）で式を挙げた．

Ｂ　本文の内容に合うものにはＴ、合わないものにはＦを書きなさい．

(1) Oona had done much acting before she was introduced to Charlie. ( )

(2) Oona had so many nice things such as a sense of humour and tolerance that Charlie soon loved her. ( )

(3) Hardly had Charlie and Oona got into their car when the Pressmen arrived. ( )

(4) When the clerk knew the man in front of him was a well-known person, he telephoned to the Press. ( )

Ｃ　（　）内の語句を並べかえて、英文を完成させなさい．また、その文を日本語になおしなさい．

(1) It (ｱ.not ｲ.will ｳ.before ｴ.be ｵ.long) they get married.

(2) You (ｱ.as quietly ｲ.the room ｳ.had ｴ.enter ｵ.better) as possible.