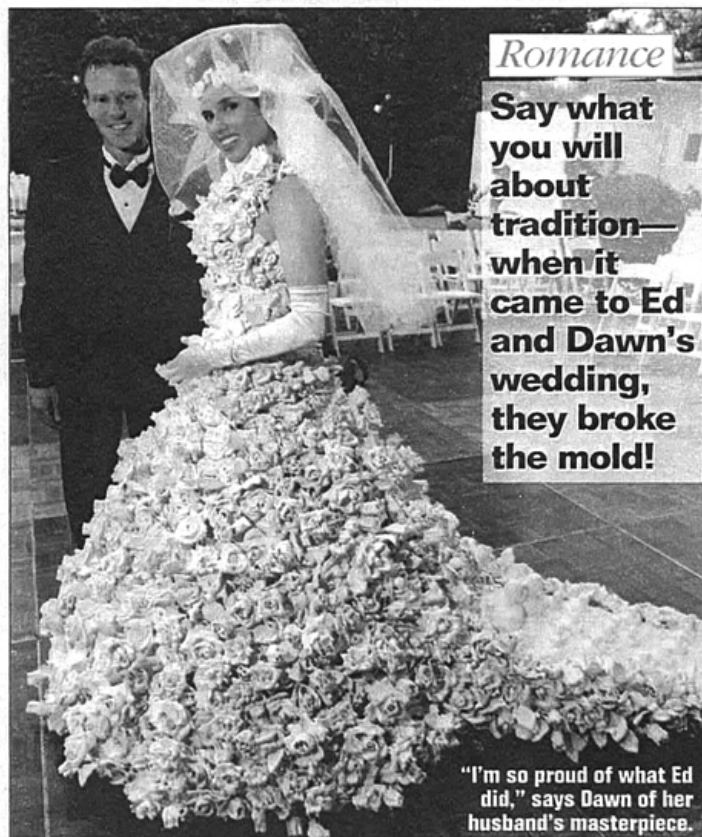


Her groom made her wedding dress —all 200 lbs of it!



Romance

Say what you will about tradition—when it came to Ed and Dawn's wedding, they broke the mold!

"I'm so proud of what Ed did," says Dawn of her husband's masterpiece.

Every beautiful bride gets *oohs* and *aahs* as she walks down the aisle. Dawn Harris was beautiful too—but she got some speechless looks and gasps. That's because she was a vision in . . . modeling paste!

When Dawn started dating Ed Massey, a sculptor, she knew he was creative—that's part of why she fell in love with him. Still, the proposal he uttered after the one she accepted took her by surprise. "Honey," he said. "Let me sculpt your wedding gown!"

Dawn hadn't thought about it much, but she had assumed her wedding dress would be, well, fabric! And that, according to her family's tradition, her grandma would buy it. And besides, Dawn didn't quite see Ed as a . . . dressmaker.

True, he'd once designed his own volleyball shorts. But this was her wedding gown—and he wanted to sculpt it. What on earth would it look like? she wondered. And what would Grandma say?

"Trust me," Ed pleaded Dawn. "It will be beautiful."

"Trust him," Grandma agreed. And the love in their eyes persuaded her.

So each night after work, Ed devoted himself to The Dress. He had a welder make a steel armature for the body of the gown. Then, into the wee hours, he'd model "roses" out of fabric and modeling paste—1,060 flowers in all! There would have been more, but Dawn, who frequently stopped by to

examine the work, vetoed that.

"Too many roses, not enough waistline," she announced.

For four months, Ed labored. But would he finish it in time? Dawn fretted—until two days before the wedding, when it was ready.

"Oh, Ed, it's . . . indescribable!"

Dawn cried—but in a good way. Pastel roses adorned the dress from neckline to hem. And then there was the

train: a five-foot masterpiece featuring plaster ducks in a pond—a symbol, Ed said, of family.

There was just one problem: the dress weighed 200 pounds. How would Dawn walk in it?

Ed had already thought of that, clever-

ly concealing wheels to help Dawn glide down the aisle.

When the big day came, Dawn did require a little more help than most brides to get into her gown—it took three people to hoist it over her head. And as she wheeled down the aisle, she said a one-of-a-kind prayer: Please don't let me fall into the water (the wedding was in a friend's backyard by a swimming pool)!

"Oh, my!" guests gasped when they saw her.

"Oh, Eddie!" chuckled a few. But Ed's eyes were on his bride—a vision in pastel roses, looking more beautiful than he'd even dreamed.

The ceremony over, Dawn slipped into something easier to dance in. The dress was put on a mannequin set out on the lawn, illuminated by floodlights.

Unlike most gowns, this one didn't need dry-cleaning afterward: "I just dusted it," Dawn says. It's on display now at Ed's studio, but the couple hopes it will wind up in a museum someday.

"Pictures don't do it justice," Dawn sighs happily. "It's truly a creation of love!"