

An Engagement at Hotel Icon

This account was written from the perspective of the then surprised dinner patron to now delighted fiancée.

My boyfriend of two and half years, Peter, was turning thirty. He kept me in the dark with all of his birthday night plans, which was driving me nuts. I finally squeezed the restaurant locale out of him, Line and Lariat inside the classic Hotel Icon downtown. Now I was really excited.

Tuesday night, the eighth of January had arrived, the very day he was born thirty years ago. All dressed up and ready to go! At this point, let me preface this story with saying that I knew had shopped for an engagement ring, and had actually made a purchase. (!) May I also say that he had made it very clear that it had not arrived yet, and I believed that.

Cocktails, appetizers and mains littered the robust table. The joyous birthday dinner was mostly a blur. I do remember the wide walled, rustic (but not TOO rustic) décor touches, immaculate room that Line and Lariat and the Hotel Icon desk shared. And of course the wonderful company, we had just spent our third Christmas together and were to embark on a cruise the next week. Life was good, little did I know it was about to get even better.

The end of the dinner is nearing, and we discuss our next move. Perhaps take in a movie at Sundance a few blocks away? Stroll around downtown? The best scenario was go to Hotel Icon's 'rooftop bar', which I didn't know actually didn't exist. The attentive waitress urges us to take our glasses of cab with us to the elevator.

The elevator is humming, we're laughing and enjoying the evening. I'm looking forward to light lit Houston skyline that awaits us. On the top floor we weave around a few hallways, I have no reservations and follow blindly. (I still have no inkling that is leading to a proposal) Pete opens up the door, to what I thought would be a rooftop bar bustling with patrons, but instead I see a glorious, vintage hotel room. The scent of roses fill my every inhalation as I turn to see flowers and candles EVERYWHERE.

I am still clueless, just overwhelmed by the fab evening we're having. I then turn to Pete, who has shrunk to the ground as he's on one knee. 'Will you marry me, Alli?' (he probably said some really romantic things, but I have no recollection due to being in shock!) 'Yes!' It was quite the occasion, and I couldn't have asked for a more perfect moment.

Pete truly gave me the grandest shock of my life, he had fibbed about the ring purchase to truly surprise me. It worked! We look forward to reciting our vows amongst an intimate group of family and friends at the Belvedere Castle Plaza in Central Park in NYC this October. Pete is a native New Yorker who fell in love with a Texan gal. While we both reside in Houston, and love it, we both appreciate our city's skyline compared to NYC.

So much in fact that we chose to revisit Hotel Icon for the spectacular city view during our engagement portrait shoot. Turns out there *is* an actual rooftop bar in one of the suites, we headed up with the team from Feather and Twine Photography. (www.featherandtwinephotography.com) They captured the beauty of the city, hotel, and our relationship. We were so pleased to frequent the hotel again for our portraits.