I MARRIED A

WHIT

SUPREMACIST

HOW MY HUSBAND WENT DOWN
THE
RABBIT HOLE OF NEO-NAZISM

ben I woke up that Wednesday, flipped on my phone and read the
local news raging like a California brushfire across my Facebook
feed, my heart sank. Eugene Antifa had unmasked a wolf among us.
Bethany Sherman — local cannabinoids queen, the business darling
of the local media, founder, owner and CEO of OG Analytical
was, and in fact still is, a white nationalist.

My partner lay back in bed, incredulous. An acquaintance of
Sherman, he could barely believe that someone who frequented
the same progressive circles, who was a leader and something of
a socialite in the hippy-dippy biosphere of the Whiteaker community had crossed city lines to
bake swastika-styled cookies for the likes of a white supremacist with the Twitter handle titled @
GenocideJimmy.

Sherman’s friends and acquaintances, including her own business partner, chemist Rodger
Vorleker, also reeled with shock. The questions had yet to be asked, but they simmered in everyone’s
subconscious: How and when did Sherman morph into a proud white nationalist Mommy? Had
she always been one? How had this facet — this glaringly huge and horrible aspect — of her
identity escaped the notice of friends and family, not least of all her co-workers and co-owners?

Bethany Sherman had laughed among us, hosted parties in the stronghold of the far-left anarchic
neighborhood, and tested the medical efficacy of cannabis for a wealth of Eugene people hailing
from all shades of the rainbow: black, brown, white, queer, Latino, Jewish, cis and straight.

Not once did anyone suspect that she had fed and supplied the hateful rally on April 24, 2017,
where her boyfriend, Matthew Combs, threw a sieg heil from behind the safety of a balaclava.

The last time I had seen a sieg heil performed by a real person, I was lying on the carpet in
my bedroom. The person performing the salute was my husband. He’d pinned me to the floor
and planted his foot on the naked space between my breasts and belly. Chest jutted, chin erect,
shoulders rolled back to attention, he held his right arm above me and uttered the words “Deus
volt” (Latin for “God wills it”) before striding out of the room in triumph.

I curled up on the floor shivering, trying to understand what just occurred: My husband had
forced me to the ground and performed a hate symbol over my naked body.

His salute was not ironic. I’m Jewish. And after years of denial, reality came crashing down.
My then-husband of six years was a Nazi sympathizer.

Unlike Bethany Sherman, my ex-husband’s
love affair with “white identitarianism” — aka
Nazism — had been in plain sight all along. How many
times had he shangled the word “kike” at me from the across
the house? At first the slur was a joke, then a tease and,
finally, a taunt. His rants escalated: “You Jews are running
down the show,” and “Ever notice all big banks are run by
the Jews?”

Finally he shipped his way into full-blown denial: He was convinced Adolph Hitler was trying to protect the
German people from avaricious banking monopolies, and that the “six million” was an imagined death toll concocted
by a cabal of Christ-killing Semites who wanted to trigger the Apocalypse.

“Hitler wanted Germany to be for Germans,” he told me, before explaining that “concentration camps were just
holding centers until they [the Jews] could be relocated to Palestine.” The gas chambers didn’t exist, my husband
assured me, and he proceeded to show me “proof” in the form of photos he’d snipped from the internet.

I knew what you’re asking: How could I have let my marriage go so far and yet remain blind to the fact that my
husband had fallen prey to neo-Nazi rhetoric? How did he become a Nazi?

All those questions and more were hurled at me from across the dining tables of restaurants and cafes as I
attempted to dine in the aftermath of our divorce. Hours of therapy didn’t help explain away his behavior, which was
betterleft unspoken.

Initially determined to piece together the real reason
why America was “no longer great,” my ex-husband,
armed with a degree in economics, embedded himself in
the big-banking Bilderberg conspiracies that then segued
into the New World Order talking points peddled by alt-right
talking heads like Alex Jones.

While I prepared a Seder brisket in the other room, my ex
imbibed alt-right news sources like Breitbart before
they were “c soc.” Russian bots weren’t to blame for his
intellectual compromise. He was more than capable of
drooling up obscure doomsday doctrines on his own. His
lamentations with pre-war Germany took on a spiritual
note as his research began to delve into the occult side of
Nazism.
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