

Perfect House Guests – the Secret Weapon

Written by L.A. Plume

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When I told him they were coming for a week, Mr. X wrote to me and said, “There should be some expectant pleasure in house guests, some joy to carry us through the drudge of toilet cleaning.



If not, we are unpaid hoteliers, which is not a popular career choice.”

Mr. X also is the consummate host and is there to reassure me, when I question my sanity at having extended another invitation, that it is necessary to get back up on the proverbial horse and entertain again. “Don't be so silly - of course you aren't going to stop entertaining. To do what? Knit quietly in the corner? No, no dear, there are those who entertain in life and the others who merely attend life from time to time.”

These guests have been here before so I knew what to expect – self-sufficiency and great humor. There are some people who can make you feel like you are a guest in their home while they are actually a guest in yours.

There were three of them, they stayed for five days, and I was truly sad to see them leave. They came in their own car, bringing things to read because they don't require constant entertaining. Exploring new places and going down the back road to see where it will lead is an adventure to them. They alternated between themselves, paying for all meals eaten out, and fixed their own breakfast in the morning. At dinner time they set the table, helped prepare the meals, washed the dishes and put them away. They happily and graciously ate anything that was prepared for them and looked forward to trying new dishes. When they left, the towels (they only used one each) and sheets had been put in the washing machine; the bathroom was cleaned, and the trash was bagged to take with them to throw away.

Jewelry, clothing, and chocolates were brought as gifts. They played with my dog and groomed my cat. My friends made me laugh, gave me hope, and restored my faith in having house guests, again.

Needless to say – I was thrilled and didn't seek to question my good fortune in having such wonderful visitors. However, the “secret” revealed itself to me on the third day. Guest #1 said, “I replaced the light bulb in the bathroom.” Guest #2 said, “I brushed your cat.” #1 said, “I swept off the porch.” #2 said, “You did not – I am the better guest – I brushed the cat.” I quickly said a silent prayer of thanks to my editor, Margaret. My secret weapon was this column which they actually read; a copy of this publication had been oh-so-discreetly placed on their bed underneath their pillow chocolates.

So here is my suggestion to you, the next time you have house guests: Do the same thing. L. A. Plume's anonymity can be beneficial to all. Let your guests think it is you who writes this column.