



Dear L. A. Plume,

She's done it again. She accepted an invitation to a birthday party being given for me, but didn't invite me to hers. And what may be even worse is that she tried to pretend she invited me. I don't think calling the evening of the party and saying, "Are you coming tonight; I haven't heard from you?!" counts as an invitation, do you?

The only reason she even called was that she knew she was planning to come to the party for me. Needless to say, I wasn't in charge of the invitation list. Can you think of/suggest appropriate payback? In good taste, of course.

Ticked Off

Dear Ticked,

Are you kidding? I can think of a delicious list of retaliations, but don't get me started. Richard

Party Politics

Written by L.A. Plume
Wednesday, 30 January 2013 10:43

Brinsley Sheridan invented Mrs. Malaprop; you, however unwittingly, befriended Mrs. Faux Pas. Just adjust your thinking and instead of seeing her as a vexation, consider her a constant source of amusement. Bless her heart.

L.A. Plume

Dear Ms. Plume,

When we go out to dinner with a certain couple, there is always some sort of struggle over the check, which, after a show of strength, often results in its being split. However, the last few times they have taken and paid the bill the minute it hit the table. That is nice on occasion, but we are starting to feel like the poor relations. How can we equalize this situation without it getting messy?

Myrna B.

Dear Myrna,

If you want to pay for everyone's dinner, quietly slip the hostess your credit card when you get to the restaurant and tell her to make sure you get the check for the table. That way, when the check comes, it will have already been charged to your card and will be a done deal.

If you want separate checks, tell that to the waiter the minute he takes your drink order, and tell your friends that you feel more comfortable with that arrangement; that also does away with the fuss over splitting the check – and the accompanying math – at the table.

Rumor has it that there is a tradition in which you clink glasses with the first drink and whoever holds his glass highest pays the bill. That may be worth a try, especially if you haven't clued your friends in on the tradition, as it could lead to some very spirited haggling at the end of the meal.

L.A.Plume

Dear L.A.Plume,

I have been invited to a birthday luncheon for a very old and dear friend, the invitation says "No gifts" but I can't conceive of going to a party without a present. Can I take her something anyway, and what might be appropriate under the circumstances?

Merry

Dear Merry,

"No gifts" in my mind certainly doesn't mean you shouldn't take a gift; it means you don't need to feel obligated to take a gift. What is a birthday without presents? Take something thoughtful - like some perfume, a book, cut flowers (orchids last a very long time), or a photograph - maybe of the two of you - in a frame. Goodness gracious - if she said "no gifts" I hope there will be cake; a birthday without presents and cake just isn't a birthday. Maybe you should also take a cake, just in case.

L.A.Plume

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