

The Give and Take of Gifts

Written by L.A. Plume
Tuesday, 17 May 2016 20:01



Dear L. A. Plume,

I was invited to a wedding where the gift registry didn't include a single household item. They wanted power tools, pet beds, and the like. I understand that the days of people getting married and setting up a household are for the most part long gone, that they have been living together and have most of the domestic necessities; but still, I object to giving a gift that has no sentimentality and won't be long remembered. Is it acceptable for me to choose something not on the registry that I believe they will still like?

Pat

Dear Pat,

A gift is a gift. Choose whatever you like. The registry is simply supposed to be a suggestion list – things that know they want – but not all inclusive. It is best, however, to choose something they can return, preferably for cash, and include the gift receipt in the card.

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L. A. Plume

Dear Ms. Plume,

My nephew is getting married to a girl we don't know very well as she hails from some place north of here. I was invited to a wedding shower and the invitation said that the gifts are to only be given in cash. I think that's tacky. In the back of my mind I can hear her saying, "Well Uncle Henry gave us \$100 but old Aunt Betty only coughed up fifty bucks." I can't even go to the party. What should I do?

Aunt Betty

Dear Aunt Betty,

You don't have to send a gift if you're not going to the shower. You do have to send a wedding gift if you are invited to the wedding and the reception, but you don't have to send a gift if you are invited to the wedding ceremony only. If you have been invited to a shower, you most certainly should be on the wedding/reception guest list, so save your cash and put it towards the wedding present.

L. A. Plume

Dear Ms. Plume,

Bob and Sue were friends of mine for thirty some years. Two years ago Bob passed away. Sue is still devastated by the loss and has not yet given away any of his things. Several years ago I was fortunate enough to attend a writers conference where I was able to acquire an anthology

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of poetry signed by several of the poets. I cherished that book, but Bob was also a huge fan of several of those poets, so I gave him the book as a gift. Sue, on the other hand, doesn't care for poetry at all. Is there any way in the world I can ask her to give the book back to me?

Kat

Dear Kat,

If the book isn't something Sue will treasure, by all means ask for it back before she gives it to the local thrift shop. I suggest you write her a note with some remembrances of your times together, mention your shared love of poetry with Bob, and just ask that when she goes through his things, if that book isn't something she wants to keep for herself, that you would like to have it. If you ask her in writing, you will give her ample time to consider your request without being caught off guard, and hopefully she will go find the book and send it to you.

L. A. Plume