

When in Doubt, Just Be Nice

Written by L.A. Plume

Wednesday, 30 December 2015 07:57 - Last Updated Wednesday, 30 December 2015 08:32



Dear L. A. Plume

Every year, thanks to in-home, easier-than-ever-to-use PCs and printers, we seem to get more lengthy Christmas letters. One special one, from folks in California whom we never see, had a paragraph's worth of details on the exquisite bed linens in a quaint B&B in Murmansk. Do I give a whit? Not unless I'm headed for Murmansk (unlikely), in which case I'll ask you. Do they think we care? How conceited can people get?

Fed Up Frieda

Dear Frieda,

I so agree with you re: some of those card enclosures, and then others are a delightful way to catch up on some distant friend's life. I am especially fond of the ones that mention names and I have no idea if they are people or pets; I, personally, name my vehicles, but I don't think I would ever send a card including "Miss Ruby" in the signature line. I have an idea – why don't you edit the letters and send them back with comments? Bet you will never get another one! Or, let go of your humbug and have some eggnog.

L. A. Plume

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Dear Ms. Plume,

Whatever has happened to the personal pronoun "you" - either singular or plural? Instead of "look at this" we hear "you guys, look at this." Or in a restaurant or at a ball game, it's "c'mon guys, follow me" instead of "would you please follow me?" And on a popular TV real estate show, it's "well, guys, what do you think of this house?" And the persons so being addressed are not necessarily of the male persuasion. "You guys" seems to refer to man, woman, child, house pets, livestock - you name it! Am I the only one who is damned sick of being called a guy?

Adult Woman from Ardmore

Dear Adult Woman,

There are lots of questions of etiquette, so many of which have no answers, like this one. People just don't know any better, or don't care. I'm surprised that half of the population graduated from high school without, apparently, taking any English classes. I feel your pain because I sometimes just want to slap someone who can't use a pronoun correctly. We are not in the business of educating adults so just do your best to ignore it.

L. A. Plume

Dear Ms. Plume,

What is the protocol for thanking someone for a thank you gift? I did a favor for a friend and she gave me a lovely gift as a thank you to me, should I now thank her for that gift?

Confused

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Dear Confused,

It really depends on how the gifts were given and received – if it was handed to you in person, and you thanked her then, you're in good shape. If she sent you the gift, then you should acknowledge that you received it. An extra thank you never hurts.

L. A. Plume