

Fine line separates matrimonial magic from wedding day woe

by Denise Sautters

Cakes that slide off the table, skunks threatening the flowers, candles melting in clumps! What is a bride to do when a disaster strikes her wedding?

Calm down, say readers and experts in the field.

WEDDING DAZE - When it comes to weddings, you have to keep a sense of humor. CNS Illustration by Eri Hashimoto. "When it comes to weddings, you have to keep a sense of humor. Don't get caught up in 'perfect' because you may come close, but you're dealing with humans and things happen," said Jean Young of Mocksville, N.C.

In her case, her father-in-law decided to stand on a chair and announce he was hungry and hadn't had a thing to eat. She explained that along with the food there were drinks that could have added to the situation.

"It was actually funny later since this man was not a drinker!" In the case of Brenda Bowe, Murphy's Law ruled.

She and her husband were supposed to get married in March 1990, but instead, got married in September 1989. On the day of the wedding, the aisle runner broke, the wax from the candles was falling in clumps on the floor because of the 90-degree weather, the singer lost her place in the middle of the couple's song and had to start over, and her husband's uncle was told to put his nuts and mints back on the cake table until the cake was cut. And that isn't all.

"I packed clothes for my husband at my in-laws' home the day before our wedding and when we got to our honeymoon destination, (found that) I packed all of his brother's clothes instead of his and none of them fit," said Bowe. "We ended up going to a grocery store to get food to eat since all he had was his suit. We had a

microwave in our hotel room, but no silverware. We only stayed for the weekend and returned home to open our gifts. We never looked upon it all as a disaster, just laughed because it was something we'll never forget."

REAL DISASTERS

Things will go wrong, said Bill Manos, who has been deejaying weddings in the Midwest for the past 25 years.

"I do at least 20 a year, and I can tell you, most weddings are absolutely wonderful and elegant affairs with love all the way around. There is only a small portion of disasters."

And those disasters, he said, seem to involve alcohol.

"I did one wedding where the ceremony and the reception were in the same hall," he said. "Unfortunately everyone was ready, the bride, bridesmaids, even the priest was all set and nobody could find the groom," he said.

He was 20 minutes late and stumbled into the hall "drunk as a skunk," Manos said.

"The priest and both of the dads grabbed him by the arms, took him to the back hallway, and gave him a good reaming out."

At another wedding, Manos said, the reception began and the dancing was in full gear. It was time to throw the bouquet and garter, and no one could find the groom or groomsmen.

"Everyone was looking and looking. They had all gone outside and shared a bottle of Jack Daniel's. The groom was passed out on the hood of his car and the groomsmen were laughing so hard they were on the ground. The bride was not happy."

NEAR DISASTERS

Of course, not everything is a total disaster. There are some near disasters, just ask Ohio photographer Chad Tsoufiou.

"One time, I got to the church, opened my case and started getting ready to take pictures. I didn't have a (compact flash) card," he said.

In the digital world, without the card which replaced film in cameras, there are no pictures. What did he do?

"Luckily, I was in Cleveland and I saw a camera store nearby, so I went and got a new card."

Now, he said, he double-checks to make sure he always arrives with a digital flash card.

At another wedding, he said, he took a photo during the bouquet toss. As the young woman who caught the bouquet reached, the top of her dress came down. "I discreetly showed the picture to the bride and asked her what she wanted me to do, print the picture as is, or if she wanted me to fix it so it looked like her top was on. She chose the latter."

Travel agent Cindy Lorenz had a bride come in the day of her wedding worried about her honeymoon.

"Her hair was all done and her veil was on," remembers Lorenz. "The problem was, she and her husband were leaving for Cancun the next day and that was the day a hurricane was supposed to slam into Mexico!"

The couple ended up going to Jamaica the next day, thanks to Lorenz's quick thinking and the couple's investment in trip insurance.

Now, about those skunks and flowers.

What is a florist to do when a family of skunks decides to make their home in the same building as the coolers? That is a real situation once faced by Ohio florist Marilyn Barr.

"We had a family of skunks that decided to live under our garage where our big cooler was," Barr said. "We had been working late because we were doing a big wedding. It was dark and someone noticed a little scurrying and we wondered what it was. Then we noticed a little burrowing going on there and we noticed there were six little eyes looking at us."

"We called Critter Control to come out, which they did and they put a cage in there. It was nerve-wracking because we had to be very careful going in and out of the building so the garage, cooler, and flowers didn't get sprayed! Nor did we."

There was another wedding she remembers that when she and her crew went to set up the flowers in the reception hall, they noticed the cake had slid off the wedding table into a big heap on the floor. The baker was notified and a new cake was delivered in time for the cake cutting.

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