

Tongue in Cheek: Going Bridal

I'm convinced that I'm a sado-masochist. I'm renovating another cosmetically challenged house. And when my best friend said "Yes!" to a proposal of marriage from her longtime boyfriend last year, I said, "I'm so happy for you!"

In each case, I should have run, very fast, in the other direction. Yes, our new house (which was previously owned by an elderly man – and looked it) is bigger and better than our last house. We're actually not on top of each other all the time. We have room to breathe. As well as room to host family at holidays without going bananas – at least, once the renovations are done. And my gay renovation gene just kicked right in the moment I smelled a bargain price for a potentially fabulous house. It's kind of a gay curse.

But three months into it, I'm wondering, "What the heck was I thinking?" The kitchen I thought I could live with just didn't work once we pulled out the lovely '70s paneling. So we need-

**kevin
isom**

much evil as he did good. What, exactly, did he do for gay folks – aside from opposing gay marriage and our very right to exist as God's children just as we are? I've been angry at the Pope for years over the plain out evilness of his attacks on us, but when someone mentions the Pope's death – in the workplace, for example, it's unseemly to launch into a tirade. So I just look at them with a conspiratorial smile and say, "Actually, my master, Satan, has directed us to rejoice." That usually cuts the conversation short.

"Yes, this is my fabulous gay life. God, I hope the straight people don't find out!"

ed to re-do the cabinets and replace the appliances. And if we were going to tile the kitchen floor, then why not the adjacent den, too? You get the idea. I know it'll all be done eventually, but as I was replacing the bathtub drain stopper in the tub we just had reglazed, I was thinking, "Yes, this is my fabulous gay life – God, I hope the straight people don't find out!"

Speaking of God, the Pope died as I was replacing that drain stopper, and the world burst into collective grief, at least according to the news media. But I find it hard to mourn a man who, it seems to me, did about as

Speaking of Satan, why was I happy that my best friend finally got engaged and decided to plan a wedding? It seemed such a lovely idea. She's living in England and marrying a Brit. The wedding will be in a small church in a small English town. The church is of fairly recent vintage, being built sometime in the Middle Ages. It all sounded charming and wonderful. Until, that is, I met Bride-zilla.

Apparently, all brides become this way at some point. They are so stressed and miserable with the details of the perfect wedding that they would just as soon bite your head off as speak

to you, if you say one wrong word. The groom never helps enough in the planning, all the bridal magazines tell the prospective bride that this must be the most perfect day of her life, and even otherwise intelligent and enlightened brides cannot help buying into this nonsense.

So to say the least, my best friend's a bit stressed out. And when you say to her, "Um, sweetie, I'm renovating an old house, so I'm juggling a bit myself right now," the response is a devastating, "Well, I'M PLANNING A WEDDING!" All else – renovations, the death of the Pope, the potential for nuclear holocaust if Iran gets nuclear weapons and launches them at Israel – is entirely insignificant.

Remember how an insane postal worker went on a killing spree some years ago, and people started using the expression, "going postal"? My best friend has gone bridal. And I'm afraid. Very afraid. The wedding insanity, I have realized, is the best argument I've seen against gay marriage: do I really want to be Groom-zilla?

So when I take a break from my renovations to fly to England in a couple weeks, I'll be prepared. I ordered the most appropriate accoutrement I could for a bride to be, something to make her feel special, to change the focus from the wedding itself to her actually being in her own wedding. When she meets me at the airport, I'll tell her that I have the perfect accessory for her outfit, and I'll pull out the Miss America-style sash I bought that reads "Bride to Be." It also lights up. With flashing lights.

She'll get to feel the focus is on her. Which, as my best friend, a lovely person, and a bride to be, she most certainly deserves. And I'll know I've done a community service by warning the unsuspecting public that they are in the presence of a bride.▼

Columnist Kevin Isom is the author of It Only Hurts When I Polka and Tongue in Cheek and Other Places, available at bookstores and online. He may be reached at isomonline@aol.com or KevinIsom.com.

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