



QUOTH THE MAVEN

BY BEVERLY KING POLLOCK

Old Song, New Words

I was sitting down paring and peeling my Bar Mitzvah list in hopes of getting the invitations out before the Bar Mitzvah when my engaged daughter started talking.

"You know," she said, "I was just adding up my college credits. And in order for me to cram four years into three so I can graduate the same time with 'You-know-who'...."

We had been all through this before. Wasn't I paying tuition 12 months a year now instead of nine? But I said only "Mmph" to let her know I was listening.

My daughter continued, "With my overload of courses and extra summer classes...."

I found myself interrupting. "You'll be able to take off spring quarter from school," I said, "to get ready for your wedding in May."

"Which means," she said, "I won't have enough credits to graduate."

It seemed to me she was saying something I hadn't heard before. It sounded like a major change in policy speech. I wanted to act warm and understanding but all I could say was "Huh?"

My daughter drew in her breath. "You-know-who' and I want to graduate a year from this June -- that's a year after we are married, right?"

"Right." At least I said something right.

"If I take off a quarter and wait until June to transfer to school with 'You-know-who'," she said, "I'll be stuck there a semester after he graduates."

I said, "I think you're trying to tell me something."

And she said, "'You-know-who' and I want to get married this January instead of waiting till May."

"But that's only four months off," I said, "How can we make arrangements for a big wedding that soon? And what about the plans and the people we already called?"

My daughter said, "I'll be happy to phone and cancel."

My husband and I had a series of consultations and then I called my future mechutonesteh. "What do you think?" I asked.

She said, "I dunno. What do you think?" Then she invited us over for additional consultations.

We arrived at "You-know-who's" house and

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his mother asked whether we'd like some coffee. I declined for fear it would keep me up all night.

And his mother said, "You'll probably be up all night anyhow."

Its nice to like the family your daughter is marrying.

We consulted. And then we sent the engaged couple out for a walk. Then we consulted some more. Then the engaged couple came back.

"Well?" the couple said.

"Well?" the mothers and fathers said.

"It's settled then," "You-know-who" said, "January."

And my daughter said, "We'll have a small wedding just as we wanted originally."

"A small wedding?" my mechutonesteh said.

"A small wedding?" I said. Neither she nor I had a large wedding and we were hoping that our son and daughter....

"We both have to go back to school now," "You-know-who" said, "and we won't be around to help make plans...."

"But let's be practical," I said. "A small wedding will mean a lot of relatives can't be invited and I wouldn't want to hurt their feelings...."

"Invite them to brother's Bar Mitzvah in November instead," my daughter said. "The weather will be nicer than in January and the family can still have a great reunion."

So instead of having a small Bar Mitzvah and a big wedding, we would have a larger Bar Mitzvah and a smaller wedding. I guess my relatives wouldn't mind.

Then I looked at "You-know-who's" mother. What about their relatives? It doesn't seem fair....

My mechutonesteh smiled. "They'll understand," she said. "And there'll be other happy times."

We kissed goodbye.

On the way home in the car I said to my daughter, "So there'll be no big shul wedding with the dinner and the dancing?"

And she answered, "Just a beautiful home ceremony with 40 or 50 immediate relatives -- the way I've always wanted."

I tried once more. "But won't you miss not having a big wedding?"

She said, "Did having a small wedding make your life with Daddy any less happy?" And she added, "If you're anxious to spend that money, I know a couple who would rather use it."

One thing I can't stand is people who are practical.

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