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Sharing the Spotlight

What happens when a close friend or family member ends up getting married at the same time as you?

By Jennifer Magid

What is a wedding without those you love sharing in your joy? Still, I must admit: When I've pictured my wedding in the past, the image usually revolves around my fiancée and myself. Not me, my fiancée, and his brother.

Oh, Brother

My fiancée's only sibling, his brother, is his best friend and closest confidante. They're so close in appearance, age, and interests, many people think they're twins upon first meeting. They even have twin pets—dogs from the same litter, who also look and act alike. I, of course, always saw the differences. But even from the beginning, when I first suspected that "boyfriend" might soon officially change his name to "fiancée", I had a running joke with friends. I bet that "brother" decides to get engaged as soon as fiancée does, I would kid. After all, when the then-boyfriend and I decided to move in together and move to a new state, brother did the same, finally moving in with his girlfriend...to the same state as us.

Wedding Redux

In my current engaged state, I've quickly learned that weddings tend to bring out sides of people you never knew existed. It's not surprising—planning a wedding can be totally overwhelming. You open a bride's magazine or click on a website, and the next thing you know, you're freaking out over the difference between cream and ecru. And you're not the only one getting caught up in the craziness—your mom insists on a certain florist or else, and your bridesmaid starts worrying a year in advance if she'll have a date to bring. As nutty as wedding planning can be, there were two major things that happened which, I admit, brought out my inner bridezilla when my fiancée and I got engaged. First, my cousin announced her engagement, and then quickly announced she had picked the same weekend for her wedding as I had.

Secondly, fiancée's brother started looking for a ring for his girlfriend. And the ring brother picked out ended up being a very similar one to mine. Finally, after announcing his engagement within months of ours, brother decided to have their wedding a month before ours.

It's Not Just About You

With the spotlight no longer belonging to just my fiancée and myself, I've gone through an array of emotions. While fiancée could care less, I admit that I've blown between feeling upset, irritated, indifferent, and guilty at being unwilling to share my time as "the bride". But ultimately, I've come to realize that a wedding is about two things. It's about the couple, of course. And it's about so much more than the couple.

Whatever happens with other people as you approach the big day with



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the love of your life, no one can take the moment away from you when you say "I do" to each other. That's your moment, and your moment alone. But a wedding is not just a melding of two people together. It's also a melding of two families, for better or for worse. If my cousin is happy, that makes me happy (she ultimately ended up changing her wedding plans). My fiancée is happy for his brother, and I am too. And that is what a wedding is really all about: happiness for other's joy.

I'm just making sure to keep our custom wine label idea to ourselves.

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