WEDDINGS

**Lorna:** So, tell me, how are the wedding plans going?

**Nikki:** They’re fine, they’re fine. It’s only three weeks to go, which is a little bit scary.

**L:** Oh, you must be so excited.

**N:** I am but I’m— I’m quite nervous as well. But yeah, no I am excited, I really am. I just— I just— I can’t wait for it to happen now. We’ve been planning it for well, for six months so yeah, I can’t wait. I had a— I had a long phone call with my mother-in-law-to-be last night, [*Oh.*] and, so you know Patrick’s American? And, um, it’s just weird like, we’re having the wedding in Scotland, you know, and so it’s mostly a Scottish wedding but then because he’s American there are little things that are gonna happen I think that are, it­­— it— it’s— it has more of an American flavour than I thought it would.

**L:** Oh right.

**N:** And some of it I think is … um … stuff that I expected and some of it I— just things that I had no idea were differences between American and British weddings. Like … um … oh let me think of an example. Like the rehearsal dinner for example, we don’t really have rehearsal dinners in Britain…

**L:** I’ve never been to one.

**N:** No, no. And they’re a massive thing in America. Like— so she was asking me last night ‘so what about the rehearsal dinner, when’s that happening?’ and I was like ‘mmm, yeah, we’re not having one of those’.

**L:** Crikey.

**N:** Yeah. And—

**L:** Wh— what does that actually involve, a rehearsal dinner? Wh­­— why do you need to have one?

**N:**  Well I think it’s … um … it is literally so that they can— well partially I think it— it’s so they can walk through the ceremony and do the whole ceremony with everybody in their right places and things so that everybody know what they’re gonna be doing. It always happens the night before the wedding. And— it— but I think the other reason now is that it gets all of the bridal party together and gives them another reason to kind of spend some time together and— because they’re the most important people, they’re supposed to be the most important part … um … part, the most important part of the day and of the guestlist. But for me, I want it to be all about the day, and not the night before, so I’m not really keen to run through everything the night before.

**L:** I suppose it might help … um … anybody with cold feet. I’m sure [*Yeah.*] you’re both really excited about the day but as— just kind of nerves going up to it, if you’ve had a kind of easy going run through beforehand [*Yeah.*] it might be quite helpful.

**N:** It did— it did make me think that maybe we should be at least having a rehearsal, even if we don’t have a rehearsal dinner, we should - yeah, you’re right - have a run through so that we can calm down a little bit. Cos it is, it’s quite scary, and there’s a lot of— a lot of sort of ceremonial parts to it, like things that you’re supposed to do in a certain order and that have to happen one after the other in order for things to run smoothly, so I think probably a rehearsal is quite sensible. Um, the other thing that I found out, and actually we’re doing this the American way and I didn’t even realise, was apparently, traditionally in Britain the bridesmaids walk out after the bride because they’re supposed to hold her train [*Mmm.*] and so on, whereas in America they flip that way back and they change it so the bridesmaids come in first. And that I think is partially the way they see it is that, it’s supposed to sort of be their … um … it’s supposed to make people sit up and go ‘oh look, the bride’s about to come!’ and— whereas— and— so— sort of then it works up to the bride arriving.

**L:** So you can really make an entrance that way I suppose.

**N:** Yeah, yeah. Exactly, I think that’s the idea behind it. And I’d just planned it that way because logistically it just works better for me that way, to have my two sisters, who are my bridesmaids, come in before me. Um, but yeah, it just so happens that Jenny— Jenny, my mother in law, was happy about that because that’s the American way. Um, and the other thing that I’m really nervous about— about the American part, is that in America, when you … um … when you have your wedding cake, you have to feed— the bride and groom feed each other a piece of wedding cake.

**L:** Oh.

**N:** I know, and that’s a bit weird, but I— that’s fine, that’s part of their, you know, their— their custom and that’s fine, but in some weddings, the groom stuffs the cake into the bride’s face. And I’m so scared that Patrick might do that! And I— so I had to warn him the other night that that is not acceptable, he’s not allowed to stuff the cake into my face. But I don’t really know how common it is, because I’m not American, I’ve never been to an American wedding. I just read about it.

**L:** That seems quite nice … uh …

**N:** You— really?

**L:** Well, apart from the stuffing the cake into your face, but to— to feed each other the cake, that seems like a nice gesture. I think that’s quite romantic [*Yeah.*] in- in a way. Yeah.

**N:** We’re doing this other nice thing that’s … um … gonna be a nice mixture of Scottish and American, which is … um … so you know a Scottish quaich? So a quaich is like a little … um … I guess it’s like a bowl that traditionally is … um … it would be made of wood or metal and … um … we have one of those, and you— we’re going to have it engraved with our sort of, our date and our names and everything, and we’re gonna do a quaich ceremony where you pour whisky into the quaich and you have your family each drink from the quaich and it’s supposed to sort of bind the two families together forever. And so we’ve decided that we’re gonna do that, but to make it American we’ll use American whiskey - Bourbon - rather than Scottish whisky so it’s like a little bit of each, and then our families will come up to the front and— and drink from the quaich.

**L:** That’s a lovely tradition!

**N:** Yeah.

**L:** That— that sounds so nice.

**N:** Yeah, I think it is nice. [*And—*] And he’s quite pleased that it’s a bit like, you know, using American whiskey.

**L:** And you’ve not told me what I think is the most important part: is Patrick going to wear a kilt?

**N:** He is! He is gonna wear a kilt, yeah. Obviously in America they wouldn’t wear kilts … um … in America they would wear a— a suit, but his— he doesn’t really like suits very much and I think he associates them with work … um … so he was really keen to wear a kilt actually. [*Fantastic.*] Which I’m delighted about, yeah.

**L:** What about your family? Do you have … uh… is your dad going to wear a kilt, or any uncles, or relatives that are coming? And will— will it be your tartan, or …?

**N:** Our family tartan’s not very nice … uh … so no I don’t think we’ll probably use the— the— our family tartan - in fact, I know nobody’s using our tartan. But … um … we will have quite a few people in kilts. My dad will be in a kilt, and … um … all of the— the— I think basically all of the wedding party will be, so all the ushers will be and none of them are Scottish, they’re all— there’s one that’s English, one that’s … uh … Lithuanian, one that’s … um … American … um … and then- yeah, so they’re from everywhere and they’re all keen to wear kilts as well. I think they all see it— and we’ve actually had quite a few guests ask us if they can wear kilts too, just cos I think they see it as a bit of fun, something they’ll never ev— have another opportunity to do.

**L:** I think— I think it’s great when you have an international group of people and you can really … um … open up a country’s traditions to— to them. I think it’s great when people can get involved in things like that. [*Yeah.*] So it sounds like it’ll be fantastic.

**N:** Yeah. I hope so. I think people seem to be quite interested in the idea of it being a Scottish wedding and something a bit different to what they’re used to, so yeah.

**L:** I can’t— I can’t wait to see the photos. Have you got a professional photographer?

**N:** Yeah we do. Um, yeah, I have— I haven’t met him, I really hope he’s good, but … um … yeah we do, we’ve got — we’ve got somebody coming who’ll be there all day and I’ve asked for him to just, you know, kind of be in the background, and I don’t want all the pictures to be posed, I want them to be just kind of relaxed and natural so he just picks up things as they happen rather than, you know, asking people to— to pose for photos all day. Um, so— yeah it’ll be nice, I’m looking forward to seeing the photos as well I think! Once I can relax and just never have to plan anything ever again, not have to go home in the evenings and, you know, email a hundred different suppliers about napkins and invitations and all sorts of things.

**L:** Well, after the honeymoon … uh… we’ll have to meet up and have some [*Yeah.*] cake and look through them together.

**N:** Yeah, cool.

**L:** That’d be great.

**N:** Good, alright then.

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**N:** Yeah, the other thing Jenny asked me about last night on the phone was … um … a bridal shower, which we just don’t have over here. [*Mmm.*] I don’t really know what it involves but I think it’s … um … just supposed to be a daytime party … um … and it’s just women. I don’t really know much more than that, but I’m— I know I’m not having one. Not over here. So I don’t know whether she wants to throw me one in America when we go over there afterwards but …

**L:** I’ve heard of a baby shower when … um … people come and give the mother of a baby presents. [*Mmm.*] Um, I think it tends to be gifts for her rather than for the baby but I’m not sure.

**N:** Yeah. Well maybe … mmm … cos— yeah, maybe it is all about presents.

**L:** Well that’s nice!

**N:** Maybe I should have one! No, I— I don’t think I need more presents. Um, yeah, and the other thing that I found really funny about the guests that are coming over is all of the American guests have emailed me saying ‘do I get to wear a hat to this wedding? Is everybody gonna be wearing hats?’ and for me that’s a really traditional British thing that I don’t think is really the case anymore — people do wear hats to weddings but not— it’s not expected the way it maybe once was. I think in the past, yeah, it probably was true that women wore hats on— when they went to the races, and when they went to a wedding, and those were the two times. Or— I think to a funeral as well. Um, and now you get a mix, it’s not sort of— I don’t think it’s— it’s set in stone where it’s either a hat wedding or non-hat wedding. Um, but I’ve had a lot of American guests ask me if they can or should wear a hat and I’m— I’ve just sort of responded and said ‘yeah, if you want, if you want to, if it’s a good opportunity for you to wear one, but don’t feel that everybody will be, it’s not a thing, you don’t have to wear one’.

**L:** I think … um … for our parents’ generation it was really common [*Mmm.*] but not— not many of my friends who have gotten married recently have thought about wearing hats [*No.*] so … or— or friends who have been to weddings recently. I’ve never worn a hat to a wedding.

**N:** No, no, I haven’t either. I have worn a fascinator once but not a hat. Um, oh, and the other big thing I’ve found is that— I’ve only got two bridesmaids, which I think is fine. They’re my sisters, and they’re wonderful, they’re being so helpful and that’s all I need. Jenny was amazed that I only have two bridesmaids because in America they seem to have five, six, seven. Which is just mad, total madness!

**L:** My cousin got married in the United States. So he— he grew up in the States and he married an American woman and she had seven bridesmaids and he had seven groomsmen.

**N:** Oh my Gosh! Yeah, yeah, and the groomsmen’s the same, yeah. With— and— Patrick has— he has a best man and he has four - well, we call— what we call ushers, so the same as groomsmen , yeah - um … and— but the groomsmen do more in America apparently. They— I think they’re much more like bridesmaids, they’re— they kind of help on the day and— and prepare things and— whereas ushers over here … um … I think you probably have fewer of them generally but their job is simply to seat people in the church really, isn’t it, and to— to put people— to get people to the right places at the right time. Um, so I’m kind of taking the best of both worlds there and— … um … especially because our wedding is in my parents’ garden, it’s not in a— in a venue where we have somebody controlling everything for us where— we have to do everything ourselves. Um, so the ushers are really helping a lot, and they’re gonna need to— one of them’s looking after the band and making sure the sound system works and running the video camera as well, and then there’s another one who’s gonna have to look after parking and- you know, they really are being used. So we’re— we’re buying all of their kit and we’re gonna, you know, thank them and so on, and give them a present, and really— they— you know— they— they’ll feel special on the day but they’ll work hard as well!

**L:** Well that’s great, as long as you’ve got lots of people to help you. [*Yeah.*] That’s good.

**N:** Yeah.

**L:** And— and is— does Pa— so Patrick’s got a best man, doesn’t he?

**N:** Yeah.

**L:** But he’s not— he’s not Scottish or American?

**N:** No, he’s Lithuanian-Canadian [*Wow.*] but he lives in Japan so it’s quite an international wedding. Um, which I think is more and more common now isn’t it? I’ve— I keep reading about these interesting weddings where, you know, the bride and groom are from different places and there are all sorts of cultural … um … kind of titbits that are coming in from different countries because of places they’ve lived or because of where their guests are from or because of their heritage. It’s really— it’s cool, I think it’s— everybody feels much freer these days to … um … to play with the format of the wedding. You know, the ceremony still has to be the most important part and it still has to be very serious and earnest, and— but I think you— there’s more freedom to— to do what you want with your wedding and to present yourselves and— and— and the celebration in the way that you want to your guests, which is really cool. Um, I’m looking forward to it.