Twitter Thread by Mary Katharine Ham



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Trying to get my husband a Christmas present: a thread.

My husband is very hard to shop for. He is quite particular and buys everything he wants for himself anyway. But THIS year, he mentioned one thing one time, and it was perfect. All-weather mats for the Jeep. Great!

I'm texting the whole family like I'm pitching a multi-level marketing scheme. I am offering YOU the opportunity to get in on the ground floor and sponsor a floor mat and finally get this man something he actually needs and wants. Let me take this off your Christmas plate.

I have my friend @okmaher order the mats for me so it doesn't show up on the credit card. Oh, we are so clever! Surely, the mats will arrive at my home in a nondescript box just like every other Christmastime order!

Car dealership: Pulls up to the house, knocks on the door, and hands my husband a clear plastic bag full of cargo liner and floor mats. For those who do not know me, I am very invested in surprises, and clearly I need better op-sec. This was a stroke of bad luck.

But I have another Christmas present idea. And this one is EPIC. For those who don't know my story, I was married before, for 4 years to my 1st husband, Jake, who passed away suddenly in 2015. We had a beautiful, sassy 2-year-old daughter and I was pregnant with our second.

Two years later, I met Steve and about two years after that, we were married, on March 7 of this insane year. It was the last possible weekend one could get married before the world went crazy. One last great guilt-free party in paradise! My daughters were our flower girls.

Now, when one meets and marries a wonderful man who is an active parent to one's children (and, man, can he Dad with the best of them!), there is a way to make that official. I am not the paperwork person in our household, by a long shot, but that just makes the surprise better!

I called a lawyer to have an *adoption petition* drafted! We've obviously talked about this and agreed to it in theory, but just hadn't acted on the legal part, partly because doing legal/clerical things in a pandemic is hard.

I took a Zoom call with the lawyer under the guise of a work call. Oh, I am so clever! She informs me this is easily done, at least enough to present him something to sign by Christmas. My Lord, I'm writing my own Hallmark movie, y'all. This is going to be beautiful!

I emerge from my meeting very excited to have this under the tree for him, and run into him in the hallway. "Hey, babe, going to the gym? Okay, see you when you get back." He goes off to get his workout in.

While he is at the gym, a deposit for the lawyer hits the credit card. I had told them this was a Christmas present, but lawyers got to get PAID, and they don't take Venmo via my friend @okmaher. I know, I know, op-sec fail.

Unlike me, he is keenly aware of what hits the credit card, and is annoyingly vigilant, even at Christmastime! I know that now. He sees the firm of Such-and-Such and So-and-So come in with a charge and thinks to himself, "that seems odd. I should *energetically* investigate!"

So, he Googles the name. Google results: Such-and-Such and So-and-So: DIVORCE LAWYERS. So, now he's breathing fire at the gym, probably lifting very heavy and looking very mean. He's thinking to himself, "2020 wasn't great, but it wasn't this bad!

“Is this left over from *last* month’s big fight?” He comes home after working off enough steam to talk to me. I'm in the guest room with my back to the door, wrapping presents. I feel the wind from the door as it swings open with *authority*.

"WHY you paying a DIVORCE lawyer??" I realize immediately what has happened. I drop my wrapping dramatically and turn around slowly. "Congratulations, babe, you have ruined your *second* Christmas present." "Huh?" "Think about it for a second longer."

"Family law. It's *family* law." He takes a beat, he figures it out.

"WELL, THIS IS A [expletive] EMOTIONAL ROLLER COASTER!!"

Merry Christmas, everyone! May your surprises remain unruined, or if they must be, let them be ruined in a very funny way.

I told @jennakimjones this story on "A Christmas Ham" podcast *right* after it happened and you can probably hear my adrenaline spiking. haha.

https://t.co/Pgq9rvtZKa

If *our daughters* and I are ever going to surprise this vigilant man, I really need a new plan.