

Article submitted to Reader's Digest, 29 March 1983

We wanted a simple, old fashioned wedding, the kind shown in movies about Victorian England. We found a beautiful, old church and invited a small group of family and friends. The one thing I especially wanted was to emerge from the church to a cheer and a hail of *rice*. The church we had chosen, however, didn't allow rice. The problem was that rice is hard and cylindrical and slippery. But we were told, bird seed, which crushes easily under foot, was okay.

The day of the wedding was at hand. The guests had arrived. My bride looked beautiful coming down the aisle, her white dress flowing behind her, her long blonde hair piled gracefully on her head, her lovely face beaming. The ceremony was wonderful; everyone cried; the music was magnificent. And now the part I had waited for. We walked from the church and through a gauntlet of well-wishers all throwing rice! (Well, really bird seed.) The bird seed got everywhere: in our clothes, in our hair, inside the car, everywhere; but I was happy.

On the way to the reception, and then later in the evening, my bride mentioned that she was not hearing well from the right side, as if she had water in her ear. Naturally, we had other things on our minds, so it was left at that. But two days later, it was *still* a problem.

My bride figured it out before I did. We went to the emergency room of the local hospital. It was their very first case of this type. About fifteen minutes later, my bride emerged laughing. In her hand she held the reason for her sudden loss of hearing: a shining, round grain of bird seed that the doctor had just removed from her right ear.

40 Johnstone Drive
San Francisco, California 94131
March 29, 1983

Life in These United States, Editor
Reader's Digest
Pleasantville, New York 10570

Dear Editor:

Enclosed please find a contribution for the "Life in These United States" feature. The incident described happened to my wife and me during our wedding and honeymoon and has not been previously published. We were married on July 31, 1982 in Menlo Park, California.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Franklin P. Mason".

Franklin P. Mason

READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION



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We are sorry that we are unable to use
the enclosed material.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity
to consider it, and for your good will
toward Reader's Digest.

The Editors