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Post No. 22

VALENTINE'S DAY

Valentine's Day is nothing but trouble. This year alone, it has caused me more trouble than any other day of the year so far. Yes, I know we are only in February, but my year so far has not been easy. Remember, there was the day that I bumped into Great-Aunt Hildegard (and consequently have only just stopped smelling like boiled cabbage), and then there was that whole afternoon I wasted just looking for a quiet place to read. Valentine's Day was more trouble than either of those days, easily.

What started all my trouble was that I did not know what to get Kimster for Valentine's Day. Thinking about it, my Valentine's Day trouble actually started well before Valentine's Day. Why, I spent at least two weeks agonising about Kimster's present. No wonder my Valentine's Day trouble was so very troublesome.

Anyway, to get back to the point, I knew for sure that I wanted Kimster to be my valentine. Well, of course I wanted her to be my valentine: she is my best friend-who-happens-to-be-a-girl, and I hope that someday she will be my girlfriend. The problem was that Kimster is not a mushy, romantic sort of girl hamster. She is a fun-loving, happy, practical girl hamster. That is what makes her so special. That's why I wanted to get Kimster a practical Valentine's Day present that would make her happy and not a mushy, romantic present that she probably would not like at all.

I had seen a lot of Valentine's Day presents that were exactly what I did not want to get for Kimster. In fact, if I had been trying to find a present for Kimster that was the opposite of what I wanted to give her, I would not have had to agonise at all. I could have bought her some special Valentine's Day chocolates shaped like hearts. I could even have put those heart-shaped chocolates into a heart-shaped box. I could have also chosen a big bouquet of red roses.



I would have been completely and utterly sure that the present was completely and utterly mushy and romantic and exactly what I thought that Kimster would not want.

Despite all my agonising, when Valentine's Day arrived, I still did not have a present for Kimster. I had thought of a lot of possible presents, but none of my ideas had seemed quite right. I had thought of getting Kimster a new scarf, but I had remembered that Kimster was learning to knit and had been trying to knit herself a new scarf. If I bought a scarf for Kimster, she might think that I believed she was not very good at knitting. I had thought of giving Kimster a new hat, but then I remembered that Kimster really loved the little hat she had been wearing all winter. She loved that hat because her mother had made it especially for her. If I got Kimster a new hat, every cold day she would have to decide which of the two hats to wear. If she wore the hat I gave her, she would worry about hurting her mother's feelings. If she wore the hat her mother gave her, she would worry about hurting my feelings. If I gave Kimster a hat, it would only cause her worry. I really needed to think of a fun, practical present that would make Kimster happy. I had to think of the perfect present as quickly as possible. You see, Kimster had invited me to her little box for lunch as her Valentine's Day present to me, so I needed to have the perfect present ready to give her at lunchtime.

It was then that I turned and looked out of the window. It was pouring with rain. The rain reminded me of something: Kimster had told me that she had lost her umbrella last week. An umbrella would be a very practical Valentine's Day present for my practical valentine. I set off in the rain towards the shops.

I browsed around the umbrellas, a little unsure of which one to get. There was one that was just plain black. I thought it was a bit boring. There was one which was covered in daisies. To be truthful, I thought it looked a bit silly. There was one that was covered in multicoloured stripes, which I rather liked. But then I saw it: a big white umbrella covered in tiny red hearts. It was the perfect Valentine's Day present for Kimster. It had little red hearts all over it, so it would be clear to Kimster that she was my valentine, but it was not mushy or romantic. Best of all, it was completely and utterly practical. I took the umbrella over to the till and paid for it.

I rushed out of the shop and hurried over to Kimster's box and knocked on the door. I was running a bit late because I had spent a long time looking at the umbrellas, but I thought that Kimster would be so pleased with her gift that she would probably not even notice that I was late.



"Hello, Harrison," said Kimster, as she opened the door. "You're soaking wet! Come on

in out of the rain. Did you lose your umbrella too?"

"Happy Valentine's Day, Kimster," I said, opening out Kimster's new umbrella over both of us, right there in the doorway.

"I don't understand, Harrison. Why did you allow yourself to get soaked on your way over here if you had a perfectly good umbrella?"

"Well, I could not use your present to keep me dry, could I? Will you be my valentine?" I replied.



Kimster said, "Oh, Harrison, what an original idea! An umbrella for a rainy Valentine's Day! Of course I will be your valentine."

We sat down and had a delicious lunch. When it came time for dessert, Kimster brought out a red heart-shaped box, filled with special Valentine's Day chocolates shaped like hearts.

"I just love these heart-shaped chocolates," she said. "They would make a wonderful Valentine's Day present. Of course, I love my new umbrella, but there is something special about these chocolates. Maybe I am not completely and utterly practical. Maybe I am a bit of a romantic." Then Kimster winked.



"Yes," I said, tasting one of the chocolates, "there certainly is something special about these chocolates, even though they are not very practical."

"You did get me a very practical present, Harrison, but if you really were practical, surely you would have used my new umbrella to keep yourself dry. I think you might be a bit of a romantic, too. After all, a hamster who was completely and utterly practical would not allow himself to get soaking wet so that he could give his valentine a new umbrella that no one had used before." Kimster winked again.



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With that, I knew that Valentine's Day would be a much easier holiday next year. I would just get Kimster a heart-shaped box full of heart-shaped chocolates. I decided that I would also get her a big bunch of red roses, to make sure that she would have a romantic surprise. After all, I do want Kimster to be my girlfriend someday.

The moral of this blog post is that Valentine's Day is the mushiest and most romantic day of the year. There is no point in trying to fight that simple fact. Even the most practical people, such as Kimster, can get all mushy and romantic on Valentine's Day. It is much less troublesome if you just get mushy and romantic along with them.

Bye for now!

Harrison Hamster I
23rd February 2012