

Sorority Rush

By: Robin Pascoe

An expatriate woman relatively new to life abroad was minding her own business one day, walking strenuously to nowhere on a treadmill in a posh health club. Suddenly, the woman working the stairmaster next to her shouted out: "Are you interested in being the president of our organization next year?"

"I'm sorry? Are you talking to me?" asked the woman on the treadmill, laughing nervously in disbelief. She had never met the woman on the stairmaster before in her life. "It sounded like you just asked me to head your association," she said.

"I did," said the women between steps. "So. Would you?"

"Do I even know you?" asked the expatriate woman. Sweat began pouring off her reddening face as much from nervousness as from the exercise.

"No," said the woman, working up her own sweat by now. "But your name came up at our board meeting yesterday. We understand you are a writer with a big mouth. We could use a person like you."

The expat woman was so taken aback, her so-called big mouth let her down. She was speechless.

"So how about it?"

Say NO, say NO, say NO right now, a little voice in her mind screamed. Instead, she said, "Uh....can...I think about it?"

"Of course," she replied. "But I need to report back with your answer as soon as possible so don't take too long."

The expatriate woman was just walking through the door of her home and had barely thrown down her gym bag when the phone started ringing. The family dog, who had never adjusted to the overseas move and found a ringing telephone an excuse to exercise his own big mouth, had to be calmed down as usual before she could pick up the receiver.

"Hello?" she said, slightly breathless from her altercation with the dog to say nothing of still being slightly shell-shocked over the incident on the treadmill.

"You don't know me," said the voice at the other end. "But my organization has heard about you and we were wondering...."

Is this some kind of joke? thought the expatriate woman.

"... if you would like to serve on our board this coming year."

"I'm terribly sorry," said the expat woman. "I drifted off. What did you say exactly?"

"We're putting together our new executive and your name came up at our meeting. There are several openings," explained the voice, outlining the various positions and what would be required of each.

“Sounds like an awful lot of time would be needed to do any of those volunteer jobs.”

“No, only about forty hours a week.”

When her husband returned from work that evening, the woman couldn't wait to tell him about the events of her day. “It was the strangest feeling,” she told him. “I imagine this is what it's like to be rushed by a sorority on a university campus,” she commented.

“As usual, you underestimate yourself dear,” said her husband. “Maybe these women think you would be a welcome addition to their groups. You do have a few skills,” and then added diplomatically, “and then there's that... ability of yours to express your opinions...”

“You mean my big mouth.”

“Well yes. There's that. I think you should feel flattered.”

“I don't. I get the feeling that this is recruiting season. I suppose I should be grateful there's no conscription.”

“By the way, this came for you at my office today,” he said, handing her an envelope. “I have no idea who sent it.”

Ripping it open, she immediately noted the letterhead. It was from yet another local community organization. It was a mass-produced flyer:

“Attention all local women,” it read. “YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU! Anyone interested in serving on our new executive should contact Mrs. _____ immediately. Must be in good health and willing to sign on for at least a year's tour of duty. A driver would be an asset but not required.”

“I take back what I said about a compulsory draft,” said the woman.

“There's definitely a war on.”

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