

## Can There Ever Be Peace Between Rosemary and Daisy?

I should have known this would end badly.

The first Woman in the queue said, "Why's there a Police Car outside?" I thought she was making a silly joke. And that makes me the silly one.

Do you remember I said we had a difficult relationship? Me and my sister Rosemary? How when we were in the Brownies I got a badge before she did? For tying knots? How she swore quietly all the way home then sweetly asked me if I'd help her with her knots so she could get a badge too? How her practising somehow involved tying me to a tree at the bottom of the garden? And leaving me there when she went in for tea.

It took them 3 hours to find me. By which time it was very dark and cold...

Much later we tried to patch things up by going on a Caribbean Cruise. Except we ended up in the Mediterranean instead because *She* messed up the booking. So naturally she took it out on me. Instead of apologising she lipped up and went for the Captain. Somehow *she* got moved to a better cabin while I was stuck below with lobsters peering in at me through the port hole. Somehow she made sure I didn't get near the Captain's Table where the good grub was. Then, on Karaoke night, there was R. in a miniskirt staring straight at the Skipper – as she now called him - singing, "I Will Always Love You!" You never knew R. could sing? You're right. She can't.

But I had the last laugh when we got back to Southampton. The Captain went off in a red sports car driven by his blonde wife leaving R. Meanwhile I went off with the lovely new Friend I'd made sheltering in a lifeboat.

Things went well for us so Me and Friend planned an Autumn wedding. We even included R. and I spent an extra £500 on my outfit. (The Wedding Dress girls don't care how many rings you have on your finger but they do count the ones around your eyes.) Of course R. was going to be busy on? the Big Day. Always good at planning ahead.

But something niggled and wriggled and jiggled inside my brain. It had all gone too well...

Then, one Sunday morning R. dropped round. A first for her.

*Would I do her a favour?*

I might...

*No. A big favour?*

Errr...

*I've written a Book.*

SHE'S WRITTEN A... WHAT?

*A Self-Help Book. Based on my how I tamed my own Life Rhythms. And Found Success!!!  
????*

*So would I please as a treat for me, go as her to the Book Signing in Cheltenham?*

What?

She had to be in Moscow for a secret meeting to arrange publication there. Very important. Once she signed the contract the book would be translated into Russian and make a fortune with official backing. She would be rich... And I would get a share. BUT... without the Cheltenham publicity - with its Global Reach – there would be no contract. The Date was Immovable, in the Russian way. So would I do it for her? Surely I didn't want to plunge her back into penury?

All I could say was, "I look nothing like you."

R. grinned and said, 'We are Sisters. And my stylist...'

R. has a stylist?!!

"...can make you look just like me. Don't worry. She will undo it again immediately after the Book Signing. Yes, you'll do the Signing. I *know* you can do my signature. Remember that letter you wrote from me breaking it off with my boyfriend? So you can sign a few dozen books as me."

She handed me a card and said, "Call Andrea. She'll take care of you. Before and after."

“But, that's just three days before my wedding!”

She shrugged a la Francaise and said, “Sorry. Can't be everywhere. Love you of course! But make this work for me. PULL EEEEEASE!”

“But I've never done anything like that in my life.”

“You just Sit and Smile and Sign Sign Sign. Like the Star you are. You needn't read the book. And they won't talk to you because there's a queue waiting behind. I'll make it up to you.” Somehow I agreed.

So here I am sitting at a card table smiling and signing copies of “My Way or No Way.”

It has all gone very smoothly: Stylist on time. Clothes fitted. Cab to Paddington. Stylist travelled with me. Nice but unusual, I think. But timing so tight tthe make-up has to be done at stops. So relieved when the white smock covering my outfit goes. People kept staring at me as if I was a very overgrown baby. Cab to the Scout Hut. I'd expect better of the Cheltenham Festival.

Sign sign sign...It's not done to look at your watch. The Line is king and must go on. But people keep joining it. Or re-joining since some look strangely familiar. Perhaps they like the book so much they want another copy? Really? Hard to believe. Anyway, an hour at most to go...

Then my heart sinks. A Woman in a straw hat plonks down and gets chatty: “Have you read this? I suppose you must have if you wrote it? Or did a Ghost write it? So many of them do that. Writers, I mean. You don't look much like your picture on the back cover.”

I don't mind her saying that. Then...

“Excuse me, excuse me...” says a Man behind her.

“Who are you pushing? I'm talking to the Author. Where are your manners? Are you from London? Never mind him, dear. Did it take you long to write? Do you use a pen...”

“Excuse me, excuse me...”

“Or a computer? I can't stand computers. They make me squint. What kind of pen do you use? I say you can't beat a good old fashioned fountain pen...”

“Excuse me, excuse me, excuse me...”

“Kindly control yourself! I'm addressing the Author. Do you have no manners? Or is she on fire? I hadn't noticed. But if so that's a job for the Fire Brigade. Now, please dedicate the Book to 'Marilyn' and sign it 'with Love from Dinah'. That's Dinah with an 'H'. STOP PUSHING, SIR!”

“I have business with this lady.”

“What kind of business?” said Dinah.

“Private business.”

“You conduct private business in a Scout Hut full of your betters? What in Heaven's name is this country coming to?”

She waits for an answer. But, receiving none, gets up and nods at me.

“With what do writers have to put up these days,” she bellows. And leaves.

The Man sits down and leans forwards.

“You don't have a book,” I say feebly.

“But I have this,” he says, showing me a card I can't quite read. “You are Rosemary Trumpington?”

“Yes I am,” I say.

“Then I am arresting you for offences under the Fraud Act of 2006.”

“No I'm not,” I say.

But of course it's too late.

*To be continued*

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