



THE VOICE OF REASON

In my position as an investment portfolio manager, I often have to make phone calls to other departments in the financial organization I work for. Several months ago, I placed a phone call to our accounting department, which is located on an entirely different floor in our building. Instead of the usual voice I am used to hearing, I was pleasantly surprised by a sultry "Accounts receivable, this is Regina speaking". After inquiring on what happened to Ralph, the accounts receivable manager I had grown to know and loathe, I was informed that Regina was taking over his old position. This was great news for me, not only because of her voice, but also because Ralph was the one person in the company I could never get along with.

I conducted the inquiry I needed to, said goodbye, and didn't give it a second thought. A few days later, I had reason to call accounts receivable again. This time, in the process of conducting my business, I detected that I was being flirted with. Being a bachelor and hearing that incredible voice made me curious, but at the same time I realized that not having ever seen me, it was highly unlikely that this woman could be anywhere close to serious. I coughed it up to casual friendliness and again went back to my work. The third time I called after the changeover, Regina asked if I had been on the second floor with our mutual funds manager the previous week. I had been, so I surmised that she knew what I looked like and I answered affirmatively.

This set in motion a conversation that wasn't disguised friendliness but instead, overt flirting on her part. Now I was somewhat smitten. I said goodbye and tried to go back to my work but visions of a young buxom professional with a voice that could break a heart with a whisper had me in a frenzy. The next day, I decided it was high time I introduced myself to the new employee. I made my way down to the second floor, somewhat excited and nervous and all the while hoping to not be disappointed. I opened the door to the accounts receivable office and saw the most beautiful woman talking on her headset. She smiled at me and made a "hold on a minute" gesture. After her phone call ended, I reached out my hand and said, "Hi Regina, I'm Jim from upstairs".

She answered, "Hi Jim, I'm Amy, Regina's clerk...did you need to speak to Regina?". My heart sank a little, and then the woman I would come to know as Regina came walking out, happy to finally meet me. As you might guess, she had the aesthetics of a water buffalo with a face that even a mother couldn't love. I smiled, shook her hand and had a polite but short conversation before retreating back to my office. I have since heard that as Ralph was retiring, he was able to hand pick his replacement. Why do I get the feeling that somewhere, he is laughing right now?

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