

Two Women

By Anna Von Reitz



Let's just call them Ruth and Sandy -- not their real names, because while this all happened in real life, it's not really about them. It could be about any two women in any State of the Union Assembly.

Ruth had a podcast that she authored and staffed and paid for all by herself. It was her podcast and she could use it to pursue any topics she wanted to pursue. This is just the way podcasts work.

Sandy was an Assembly officer, duly elected.

These two women fell out over the podcast. Ruth wanted to discuss business and land issues, especially farming issues, Sandy wanted it to be focused on Assembly issues and under Assembly control.

One day, Ruth just stopped asking Sandy to attend the podcast. She did this abruptly, without any warning or explanation. It was clumsy of her and hurt Sandy's feelings. Ruth sailed on, all caught up in the new topics she was pursuing on her podcast; but, in the background, Sandy was simmering and angry.

What started out as a "slight" gradually turned into a feud between these two women and for months it raged back and forth, both lambasting the other every chance they got, each gossiping about the other, each one back-biting the other, until --- to hear them talk --- these two women who started out as friends had morphed into two renditions of the Devil incarnate.

Neither one had a good word to say about the other. More incidents occurred as a result. Ruth's every mistake was turned into a national catastrophe. Sandy's

undermining of Ruth and continual back-biting was responded to by even more back-biting and gossiping in return.

Once it got started, it took on a life of its own.

The Coordinator, a nice gentle man --- let's call him "Ken" -- was stuck in the middle of this, getting constantly battered with it all, and though I called on him to put a stop to it, he was helpless before the onslaught of uncontrolled estrogen. It just went on and on and on.

And as it did, the State Assembly was torn apart and consolidated into factions --- pro-Ruth and pro-Sandy. I just shook my head. Lies and deliberate manipulations and deliberate misinterpretations were slung freely by both sides. It felt like I was back in the Corporate Boardroom again.

Then, a great storm came, a storm so terrible that it killed thousands of people and caused billions of dollars of damage, and in the midst of this I tried to get these two women to lay down their hatchets and make peace for the common good ---- and they would not.

They just kept right on tearing away at each other in the face of this huge impending disaster --- insults, suspicions, wild accusations, gossiping, back-biting, undermining, manipulating ---- and in utter frustration after months of this Bad Behavior, I gave up and I said, "you fucking bastards haven't learned anything." Unquote.

I was clearly talking to the two women at the bottom of the dogpile. Not to Ken. Not to the other members of the Assembly. I was speaking directly and only to them about their own Bad Behavior. This was a private communication to them, not meant to be shared with anyone else.

They had re-created the Monster we are all trying to get away from.

They had created "sides" and were warring against each other even with a giant natural disaster bearing down on them and their State of the Union. It was all just catfight, catfight, catfight and devil take the hindmost. Even at that dire moment.

Neither one would give an inch or a moment of peace, even with people dying all around them.

Unfortunately, Ruth didn't get the drift. She thought my comment (a private comment) was addressed to Sandy and the Coordinator, not to herself and Sandy. So she eagerly ran with it and shared my private outburst, thinking that it was a condemnation of her enemies, when in fact it was a joint condemnation leveled against her and Sandy.

My comment didn't involve the Coordinator at all. He was clearly a long-suffering and innocent bystander.

As for me, I hate lies and gossip and back-biting of all kinds, and to find these two women still "slinging" at each other in the middle of a national disaster was all I could take.

There are always plenty of things to fight about, if you are all about war and choosing sides and "coming out on top" -- but that isn't what our Assemblies are about. These two women fell back into their winner-take-all corporate indoctrination and they didn't care who they hurt or how they were tearing their Assembly apart.

All they wanted was to "win" no matter what it took. They both lost. The Assembly lost. Neither one of them seemed to notice, but everyone concerned lost because of them and their Bad Behavior.

All our efforts to help disaster victims were truncated and hampered and less-than-it-could-have-been, because these two women just couldn't give up fighting with each other and gossiping about each other. And that's a tragedy.

So, it's time to step back and evaluate.

I shouldn't have lost my temper. Lesson One.

They shouldn't have been cat-fighting. Lesson Two.

And no, this had nothing to do with the Coordinator. Lesson Three.

The Coordinator is not a CEO. Coordinators don't have the authority of a CEO and they can't "fire" members of an Assembly who are bent on Bad Behavior.

It's up to the rest of us to ride that herd and let our erring members know:

We are not here, individually or collectively, to "win" anything. This is not a game, not some kind of social contest, there are no "in crowds" and no "out crowds". What we are called to do in our Assemblies is to come together -- all of us -- and work together for the good of our country and our fellow man.

Anything that detracts from that is a loss. Anything that divides an Assembly into "sides" is a loss. Gossiping is a loss. Back-biting is a loss. Undermining others is a loss. Being hard-hearted and prideful is a loss. Cat-fighting and slandering others is a loss. Refusing to work together is a loss.

Now, at a time when that Assembly most needs to stand tall and stand together, it is divided and hurting. Some people want to blame me--- but I am here to tell you: I lost my temper, but I wasn't even close to being the cause of this problem.

This problem lies with just two women --- and all the people who put up with their shenanigans instead of turning them off.

Just as it takes two to tango, Gossip doesn't have feet of its own.

Everyone in the Assembly has been faced with a choice --- to listen to hateful gossip, or not. To take sides -- or not. To rebuke these women for their Bad Behavior or not.

So it isn't "just" a problem of the manure spreaders, it's a problem that involves all of those who stand by passively and wag their heads and put up with it.

Most of us went to High School and survived Seventh Grade Gym Class. Most of us put in our "tours of duty" in the military or in the corporate world. We can recognize this war-mongering, winner-takes-all behavior for what it is, and we can say no to it.

We can refuse to get sucked into it. We can rebuke others and remind them what we are here for.

Gossip and back-biting undermines everyone and everything we stand for. The perpetrators of this kind of behavior always try to turn it into a matter of "Us, Good Guys" against "Them, Bad Guys", but in reality there are no Good Guys in such a scenario.

Like the de facto political parties, no matter which side you choose, it's wrong. And we all lose.

Realizing that, it's up to everyone in every Assembly to put the kibosh on gossip and Bad Talking.

It's not my role or responsibility to tell Assembly members (or officers) that they are being "fucking bastards" who "haven't learned anything" about peaceably working together. It's yours.

You don't have to swear about it, but you do have to get the message across to those who are indulging in this kind of thing.

It's your Assembly, your State, that is going to suffer, if you do not.

You all set your community standards, so set them high. Don't just tolerate gossip and back-biting and cat-fighting in your midst. Realize how much this Bad Behavior costs all of us---including each one of you.

Put a stop to it and a stop to those promoting it before it has a chance to divide your Assembly into the proverbial pro-Ruth and pro-Sandy factions. Remind them that they have a higher calling and a job to do and bashing each other isn't it.

Do this early on and enforce it as a group. Don't take any sides at all. just shut it down. Tell the erring members outright -- we're not here to gossip, and if you don't have anything better to do.....come right over here. Here's a job for you to do.

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