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MUFFY BRILLOWITZ--DEBUTANTE ANTHROPOLOGIST

The man who perhaps best understands taking risks was the late, great anthropologist Louis Leakey. Leakey is best known for sending young, inexperienced women to live in the jungle to live with hairy, semi-carnivorous simians while he lounged at home sipping pina colodas. He chose women untrained in anthropology because they had no preconceptions to color their observations.

The interns who took his risks for minimum wage before were all quite successful, but Leakey wanted to send another, even more naive in the ways of anthropology. Finally, after months of searching, she was found at a sorority fundraiser in New York.

She was a sophomore of no fixed major. They were impressed, even charmed, by her total obtuseness. She didn't understand Leakey's projects, but she thought they sounded "neat." Surely she was the perfect choice.

Muffy Brillowitz--debutante anthropologist.

They quickly won Muffy's enthusiasm by vastly exaggerating the number of shopping malls in the tiny African country of Rwanda. They also warned her to be prepared for wilderness survival. Diane Fossey (one of Leakey's former interns), for example, had had her appendix removed. Muffy settled for having her legs waxed and a year's supply of bug spray. Muffy arrived at her small hut in Rwanda and immediately charmed the locals with her generous misinterpretation of the currency exchange rate. Then she began her study of the gorilla society, recording observations in her log:

May 4- The gorillas are gentle, almost human-like in manner, but definitely not Beta material. Tomorrow, Pierre arrives to groom apes.

May 5- Apes look fab! Pierre shaved their bodies but left their facial hair. They look like the Hudson Brothers! I could die.

May 8- When the foundation sent me here to study the gorilla "society," they were using the word pretty loosely. No parties, no dance clubs, no boutiques!

May 16- *National Geographic* is sending a film crew at the end of July. That gives me only ten weeks to write a script and rehearse.

May 19- Wardrobe arrives. They insist on trying a double Windsor knot! Walking-erect lessons are going fine, but they slouch.

May 24- Apes' acting classes going slowly. Why are all would-be actors always trying to imitate Brando?

June 24- My sorority sisters have flown in for a vacation. They were disappointed at the lack of beaches, but went ape for the apes--I told them they were the USC football team. Big party tonight.

June 25- The party was a blast. The apes behaved like true frat brats. Dot went for the one I call Craig.

July 25- We've abandoned our script and decided to do a music video. Perhaps a remake of Peter Gabriel's "Shock the Monkey." The film crew arrives tomorrow.

July 28- Disaster! The apes have formed an actors' union and walked off the set. *National Geographic* has threatened to forget the whole thing and just shoot another insect special.

August 1- *National Geographic* has cancelled the video and yanked my funding. But I'm determined to dedicate my life to improving the lives and social standing of these peaceful beasts.

September 1- Perhaps I have taken the wrong track, studying the gorillas in this godforsaken place. Maybe I should move them to a more stimulating environment. My Manhattan loft has air conditioning and a decent shower. We leave tomorrow.

September 18- The apes are doing marv here in New York. They are starring in their own theatrical event, *Eating My Own Young*, which opens off-Broadway on Friday.

October 5- Amazing! *Eating* has been getting rave reviews. Craig is the hottest thing since Whoopi.

October 8- Disaster! Craig is arrested on stage. It turns out he actually was eating his own young! Mayor Koch is calling for the death penalty.

October 9- Norman Mailer springs Craig in time for the big party tonight. My sorority sisters will be there. What to wear?

Muffy went on to design and market the successful "Apes Take Manhattan" clothing line, highly acclaimed by fashion critics. She replaced those corny al-

ligators with a better, more '80's status symbol--an ape's head. A few weeks after the party, Craig's trial arrived. He was found not guilty, on the grounds of "instinctive behavior," and all charges were dropped. Several years later, the apes left the States, but not until after having starred in eleven feature films, loved by critics as much as *The Color Purple*. Returned to Africa, the apes went into early retirement and lived happily ever after.

Brandon Napier