

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Addiction

by Miriam Silver

Her diary revealed that she had made lots of resolutions, all there, page by page, and it was only January.

She did join a gym, knowing the exercise she needed could well be taken by running round the block or even on a rowing machine. Too soon she was put off by all those earnest, sweaty Lycra covered guys working machines.

Acquiring her friend's allotment, determined to be self-sufficient, she sent away for seeds, tools and wellies. Driving there, parking and then digging all seem to have come to nothing when those successfully ensconced residents made it clear that her efforts were not sufficiently up to their standard and blackballed her when her weeds proliferated.

Anything involving physical effort was obviously not for her as she decided on learning a new skill. She'd always fancied Italy but so far foreign travel had been beyond her means. Hopefully a second language will further her career, perhaps she'd find Montelbano in Vigata. She did her homework diligently but her feelings of inadequacy overwhelmed her when they all gabbled away fluently, she'd joined a well-established class.

Turning to her local paper the ad for choir members jumped out at the her. After all at school she had enjoyed singing, although some members of her class acted the fool so the teacher only went over the hymns for assembly, she never did learn that choirs had defined sections.

"Altos there, sops over there in the front, bass, tenors etc. at the back." the conductor pointed helpfully.

Thanking him she followed his arm, which unbeknown to her put her with the sopranos. All went well during the warm up exercises, she even began to enjoy herself although she didn't know an alto from a soprano.

“We’ll just do some old stuff today,” the conductor said waving his arms.

“Off we go then, please, a note,” as he pointed to the accompanist.

She did try to follow the music proffered by her neighbour who sounded quite high pitched to her untuned ear who eventually suggested perhaps she belonged with the altos and directed her with a wave behind. They greeted her with a copy of the music. This thankfully obviated the necessity of standing too close to anyone, perhaps she could mime.

Undaunted, she walked home alone and accepted that she’d never learnt anything about parts and music, choirs were not for her. Then remembered she hadn’t tried Rambling, another resolution on her list.

Forgetting her resolution re things physical the local Outdoor Pursuits shop sold her boots, socks, rucksack, thermal underwear and a waterproof anorak at great cost, sure it would all serve her well, make her feel part of a hearty group, all seemingly enjoying the 12 miles they covered. No one complained of blisters, so she kept quiet and stumbled on, gratefully sinking into her car on return while refusing their, “come on, we’re going for a drink.”

As she shook her head, her latest friend added “here’s to seeing you next week, hopefully gonna do 20 miles, weather permitting.”

Driving home it came to her that she had resolved to de-clutter her tiny overcrowded flat. Keen now to get going, didn’t need specialist direction, got down to it the next day, beginning with her bedroom. Contents of drawers were tipped out onto the clothes on the floor, shoes, “didn’t realise - how many pairs?” followed.

“Too many, too much, better have a look at the kitchen.”

Reluctantly she accepted she was a hoarder, she couldn’t part with anything, and actually needed one of those women who deal in Feng Shui, that way she’ll get a good feel about a home empty and clear of the unnecessary.

Slipping into her old clothes she poured a gin and tonic and resolved to join the library, ration her screen time, go into politics or, and turned on her laptop typed in “find a partner” which immediately produced endless tick boxes all requiring descriptions, preferences, aims and ambitions.

Not being sure about any of that, she pulled the plug and resolved to “think about it tomorrow”.