

There's a Mouse in the House, Now What do We do?

**By Carmela Cunningham**

At no time is the difference between men and women more dramatic than when there's a mouse in the house. One morning, the lady of our house got up at 5 a.m., which is really the middle of the night, and opened a closet door. Out ran a little mouse, which caused the lady to let out a blood-curdling scream that both terrified the mouse and brought the man of the house jumping up from a dead sleep to rescue his wife from whoever was obviously stabbing her through the heart. And that's when all the miscommunication began.

She screamed: There's a mouse in our house! Catch him! Catch him!

He heard: Please get our broom, the one I sweep our kitchen floor with, and smash the mouse into a bloody, mousey mess on our white carpet, so I can forever remember the day you killed a mouse in our house.

She screamed: Don't kill him!

He heard: Go back to bed, there's nothing more for you to do here.

She screamed: I don't want you to hurt him - just make him leave.

But she really meant: The second I leave, find the little monster and send him straight to hell and then when I get home, tell me how you watched him run out the door, down the hall, into the elevator, get off on the first floor and escape to a better life without ever looking back.

That night he said: After you left, I never saw him again. I think he ran down the hall, rode downstairs on the elevator and left the building. But his evil thought was: I should have told her it wasn't a "he," it was a "she." And actually, she looked a little bit pregnant."

And that's when the miscommunication ended, because he didn't act on his evil thought. He didn't say another word.

After all, he's not a big dumb rat.

**Carmela Cunningham**, who loves reading and writing about history more than just about anything else, is the author of *Information Access and Adaptive Technology*, the premier text on providing adaptive technology for people with disabilities. She is chief operations officer for UCLA's Institute of Digital Research and Education and co-owner of Reader Publishing Group. See a really big dog and read more about Carmela at: <http://www.readerpublishing.com/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2011/07/Carmela-Bio.pdf>