

## SHELL SHOCKED

### I'd Rather Starve than take This Job

By Art Stevens

I saw the ad on line. It was posted in an executive recruitment website. It said " Wanted: seasoned executive to head distinguished old line Boston company." I'd been very restless recently and wanted something to do. I wasn't sure I wanted to relocate to Boston but I was definitely in the mood to put on a suit and tie. I hadn't dressed up since my IRS audit. Besides, the job interview was in New York not Boston.

I wrote up a résumé which is something I hadn't had to do in years. I exaggerated my managerial experience as you would too. I cited my volunteer work on senior citizen bocce and shuffle board leagues. In reality, my principal duty had been to wipe off the bocce balls and polish the shuffle board pucks to make sure they slid effortlessly across the courts.

I exaggerated these duties in the resume I wrote by claiming I personally was the CEO of the two leagues and was responsible for the operating budgets. The only budget I had been responsible for

was counting out the change from the pizza orders. Nonetheless I submitted my résumé.

To my astonishment I got a call one day inviting me for an interview for the high level executive position being advertised. I put on my IRS audit outfit and found myself at the super fancy law offices of Caruso and Valentino.

I waited in a posh reception room and in no time at all a buxom receptionist said "Mr. Caruso will see you now." Mr. Caruso was a well dressed attorney wearing an Armani sharkskin suit. It was so shiny that I could see my own reflection in it. He asked me to be seated and gave my résumé a quick look.

He then looked at my suit and said "I see you've been audited by the IRS." I laughed nervously and he said "welcome to the club." I felt more at ease immediately. He then said "You may be the person we're looking for. Your bocce management skills may qualify you for this position."

I was beginning to warm up to Mr. Caruso. "Can you tell me about the job?"

He looked me square in the eye and said "You must understand that our conversation today is strictly confidential regardless of its outcome. Understood?"

"Yes sir, Mr. Caruso.," I said.

"Tony. Please call me Tony."

"Sure, Tony," I said agreeably.

"Okay," Tony began. "You're probably aware that Whitey Bulger has been forced to give up his executive position from the organization he headed for many years. It appears that he is headed for a long involuntary vacation."

"Yes," I said. "I saw that on the TV news. But what does that have to do with the position you advertised about?"

Caruso lit a Turkish cigarette and inhaled deeply. "We're looking for someone to replace him as head of his organization."

At first I thought he was joking and would now begin describing the actual position he was interviewing me for. But his face remained impassive and frozen. My stomach began to churn.

He continued. "We're looking for a next generation executive who can pick up the pieces and reorganize what is now an old and tired crime syndicate into a slick and modern mob. We're looking at you to

lead us in profitable crime. We see great opportunities in gambling, protection, labor union kickbacks, graft, corruption, prostitution, drugs and jay walking.

"We need someone who can control the local law enforcement agencies as Whitey used to do in his heyday. We need someone who is not afraid to use blackmail, extortion and name calling as vital weapons in his management style. My recruitment committee is impressed with what you've been able to achieve in your bocce and shuffle board initiatives. Whitey Bulger has been a legendary figure in Boston and has big shoes to fill. We think you're our man."

I suddenly had a splitting headache and told Caruso that I needed to take a walk around the block to think about his offer. I immediately went to the authorities and begged to be put into the witness protection plan no questions asked. I am writing this column from somewhere in the world. The only hint I will give you is that I don't want anyone to tie me kangaroo down, mate.