

## Grammy at the Grammys

02.06.2007

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As a new stringer (freelancer) for People magazine, I was thrilled to get a call asking if I were available to cover a Grammy event honoring Georgia's 52 nominees. I immediately called my daughter.



"I've been invited to the Grammy party at Tiffany's," I told her. "What should I wear?"

"Whatever the other grandmothers are wearing," she said, annoyed. "A nice pair of slacks and that turquoise blue jacket should be fine."

"Not THAT kind of Grammy party. I'm talking about the Recording Academy nominees -- the real thing."

"THAT Grammy party," she gasped. "In that case, run right out and buy a leather bustier and some four-inch stilettos," she jested.

We had a good laugh over that one.

To say I'm an over-aged People correspondent is putting it mildly. Medicare knows my first name and every feminine part of me has succumbed to gravity. A bustier would need to be made from solid steel to do its job.

"I'm serious," I said. "What should I wear?"

"Why don't you stay home and I'll go in your place?" she cooed. "I've got the perfect outfit."

About that time, the list of nominees popped up on my email. "Uh, oh. I'm in real trouble now," I told her. "I have no idea who most of these people are."

I read her the list. I had heard vaguely of Ludakris but T.I.? Akon? Third Day? Field Mob? Mastadon? Panic set in.

"What should I do?"

"I told you," she said. "Take me."

"If only I could," I lamented. But the event was clearly an "invitation-only" affair and didn't include a tag-a-long. I was on my own.

Needless to say, I spent the day on the Internet, reading bios, studying photos.

That evening, I put on my sexiest camisole and matching sparkly sweater. My son -- living with me temporarily -- raised his eyebrows.

"Will I do?" I asked, twirling.

“Are going to leave on the sweater?” he asked, hopefully..

I rolled my eyes. I don’t even own a strapless bra so there was no way that cover-up was going anywhere except around my bod.

That evening, the excitement that permeated Phipp’s Plaza, the upscale mall where Tiffany’s was hosting the event, sent my heart racing again. What if I didn’t get any good quotes? How embarrassing. People would never hire me again.

The red carpet drew a crowd of star-gazers, including an old guy (my age) who wanted to know what all the hoop-la was about. He had no idea who the headliners were either. It must be a generational thing.

For self preservation, I latched on to a petite Edelman public relations manager and said through clenched teeth. “Don’t leave my side. You have to be my spotter.”

“No problem,” she replied. “You’ve interviewed tons of famous people before. You’ll be fine.”

I planted my granny two-and-a-half inch heels firmly near the door and clutched my pad and pen. I was armed and ready to pounce on whoever walked down that red carpet. Fortunately, the first celebrity was Diana di Garmo, the second place American Idol winner. She was an easy interview – bubbly, enthusiastic, thrilled to be seen at the gala.

I relaxed. The phrase, “I’m with People magazine,” was magical. It paved the way to even the biggest of the big who willingly paused for a few questions. I managed to snag most of the nominees and came up with enough material for a decent story – with time left over for a glass of champagne.

My daughter called early the next morning. “How did it go?” she asked.

“I was awesome! I bet I could even get interviews with some of the Academy Award nominees. Do you think People would send me to Hollywood?”

“Then, you’d HAVE to take me,” she said.

“Well, if we get to go, I’ll spring for a full-length orthopedic gown for me and that black leather bustier for you – as long as it has a long sleeve turtle-neck cover-up.”

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