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Staring at the options before me, I select the pink starburst wrappers as my nerdiest earrings. My outfit complete, I feel ready to attend the She’s Geeky conference with my mom. Upon our arrival at the Computer History Museum, I remember 7th grade Entrepreneurial night in the same location, presenting my company to venture capitalists. Having just started high school, I feel removed from the girl I was when I attended The Girls’ Middle School. Returning to the museum, I feel pleasantly grounded in familiarity.

Entering the room and seeing all the smart women socializing together, I was awestruck. Computer programmers, rocket scientists, gardening aficionados and more types of geeks than you can even imagine all crowded the same room, yet somehow mingled together and created meaningful connections and experiences.

I breezed through the beginning of the day in sessions like “Geek Chic” fashions, and Balloon Animals taught by a professional fairy. I even mustered the confidence to lead my own session about books, which resulted in a great turnout and plenty of fantastic book suggestions and discussions.

Later in the day, my mom and I arrived at the specialized coding session she wanted to attend. I had some programming experience and I thought the session would be interesting. However, I rapidly discovered that the material was far beyond my knowledge, and I was lost for most of the discussion. For a few minutes, I perched hopefully on the cushioned chair with my notebook and pen at the ready. Eventually, I gave up and reached down tentatively to my bag and pulled out my book. As I was about to open it and read, I caught a glimpse of the hand-written sign on the wall, and remembered one of the only rules of She’s Geeky. The Law of Two Feet states that if you are not learning or contributing, it is your responsibility to respectfully find someplace that you are. This rule simmered in my head, and I realized in frustration that I was breaking it. In a gesture of strength, I slipped my book into my bag. I breathed through the apprehension collecting in my stomach and separated myself from my mother and comfortable predictability. I felt a heart-skipping glimmer of doubt as I wandered conspicuously across the empty space over to the social media session. I sat down and immediately immersed myself in the advice of a savvy woman about how to use social media to your advantage. I was enthralled by the examples she gave of people sharing only the best or worst things about their lives, rather than the whole story. My pencil began to fly across my notebook page as I soaked in fascinating information.

Escaping from my comfort zone led me to discover that I have the ability to be independent. I have the ability to assess a situation and decide my own needs. I have the responsibility to take action on my own behalf in order to grow. This is the Law of Two Feet, and it applies to all situations. It is up to me to learn as much as I can from the opportunities available. It is not always appropriate to get up and leave if something is not intellectually stimulating, but I can find another way to be engaged and challenge myself. I choose the amount I get out of an experience.

Going into She’s Geeky, I was proud of being nerdy, which is still true. However, now I have a better sense of what that means to me. I am proud that I get excited about learning, and that my favorite subject is all of them. Being enthusiastic about challenging yourself if something to be valued. I accept the responsibility. Now, I put on my nerdy ideals with my nerdy starburst earrings.