

Copyright

“Mary’s Mice – It’s the Little Things that Kill You”

This book is a work of fiction. Any references to historical events, real people or real places are used fictitiously. Other names, characters, places and events are products of the authors’ imaginations, and any resemblance to actual events or places or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Authors: Ace Donovan, Brock Edwards, Mickey Stone

Copyright: 2025 by Ace Donovan, Brock Edwards, Mickey Stone

ISBN: **XXX-X-XXXXXXX-X-X**

Published and distributed by HoosierHorrorStories.com

Unauthorized reproduction or distribution without the expressed written consent of Ace Donovan or Brock Edwards or Mickey Stone is strictly prohibited.

Bible Scriptures in this book are from the King James Version.

Contents

Copyright	1
1 – The Rumor Mill at Sethritch Pharmaceuticals	3
2 – Mary meets with the financial planners	6
3 – Meanwhile at an Abandoned Indiana Gas Station.....	8
4 – Ben: My new Best Friend	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5 – Mr. Sur’s Jet lands in Ukraine	Error! Bookmark not defined.
6 – Mary Returns to the Workforce	Error! Bookmark not defined.
7 – Trey also returns to the Workforce	Error! Bookmark not defined.
8 – Camden Institute does not give up so easily	Error! Bookmark not defined.
9 – Trey’s first day on the loading dock	Error! Bookmark not defined.
10 – Mary’s First Day at Camden Institute of Technology.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
11 – Trey shares his Observations about Andropov Pharmaceuticals	Error! Bookmark not defined.
12 – Mary relaxes with the girls and Ben	Error! Bookmark not defined.
13 – Interesting Chatter on the Dark Web	Error! Bookmark not defined.
14 – A Revelation on the Racquetball Court	Error! Bookmark not defined.
15 – Suspicious Activity around the Globe	Error! Bookmark not defined.
16 – Mary and the “C.I.A.”	Error! Bookmark not defined.
17 – Insomnia, Mary and God	Error! Bookmark not defined.
18 – Mary calls Craig in the Middle of the Night.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
19 – News Travels Fast on the Dark Web	Error! Bookmark not defined.
20 – Just another day at Camden Institute.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
21 – Jenkins gets a lesson in Microbiology.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
22 – Vladmir Final Cruise	Error! Bookmark not defined.
23 – Forgive as you have been forgiven.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Chapter 1 – The Rumor Mill at Sethritch Pharmaceuticals

Mary Swallow was a nervous wreck. She was a band 3 manager in the molecular biology division of Sethritch Pharmaceuticals in Winston, Indiana. Her base salary plus benefits exceeded \$250K per year. She was a 45-year-old divorcee with two daughters: Krista, age 9 and Bentley, age 7. After the scandal of CEO Helmut Schnell running a sex-trafficking operation, the stock price dropped like a rock. The rumor mill said they were targeting band 3 managers and above.

At age 45 with two small children, Mary was not prepared for retirement, even with a year's severance package. She was too old to start over at an entry level pharmaceutical company. She would have to take a massive cut in salary. She took a deep breath and walked down to the company meeting in conference room MS-13.

Mary sat in the back of the room. Vice President Hal Reardon stood behind the podium and addressed the 500+ scientists in the room.

“Life is 90 percent what happens to you, and ten percent how you react to it. There are two things the world will never forgive you for: failure and success. Quite frankly, our dismal financial situation was the fault of two men: Kyle Roth and Helmut Schnell. I know that. You know that, but Wall Street does not care. Even though other companies are involved in scandals, we got the black eye. To be financially viable, we are offering separation/retirement packages. Our goal is to reduce the company size from 15,000 to 12,000 employees in the next 90 days. The retirement package is based on your years of service. Our goal is to achieve this reduction via voluntary separations. We’ve hired the Certified Financial Planners, Reynolds and Turpin, to aid in your decision. Please do your homework. Make your decision based on facts, not fear. Contact

your HR manager if you are interested in receiving a separation package. This situation is sad and unfortunate, but we will bounce back.”

Chapter 2 – Mary meets with the financial planners

Mary was in the middle of the road. At 12 years with the company, she would only receive six months of severance pay, not twelve. She needed health insurance for her and the girls. Her house was worth 480,000 dollars. She saved about 10,000 dollars for her children's college education. She had a master's in biology with a chemistry minor from Ball State.

The financial planner advised her to sell her house and reduce her financial burden. Scaling down to a three-bedroom ranch at 200,000 dollars would reduce the pressure. They advised her to calculate a monthly budget and have six months' worth of living expenses in an emergency fund.

For the next week, Mary thought and prayed about what she would do. She had 90 days to accept the package. If she didn't accept the separation package, she could be fired and receive no money.

Something was better than nothing. She remembered something her Sunday School teacher once told her:

“The inability to make a decision can be just as bad as making a bad decision.”

She decided to take the separation package. She managed it like a project and broke it down into steps. Step 1 was to sell the house and reduce her financial burden. Fortunately, it was a seller's market. There was a bidding war for her house. She got 610,000 dollars. Step 2 was to purchase a modest 3-bedroom ranch house for her and the girls. She found one for 210,000 dollars in a nice neighborhood south of Fort Wayne. When it was all said and done, she paid cash for the house and had 300,000 dollars in the bank. She could stay at home with the girls for a few months, but she would eventually need a new job to give her a sense of purpose.

Chapter 3 – Meanwhile at an Abandoned Indiana Gas Station...

Jenkins Roth and Sally Jo Melbourne were having breakfast at Mercer's Truck Stop on Highway 40 east of Indianapolis. Jenkins and Sally were private contractors for an elite security team of ex-military personnel.

"These are the best eggs I ever had," said Jenkins. "Biscuits, gravy, bacon, sausage patties. All the major food groups are represented here."

Sally Jo snarled her lip as she looked at his plate. "Yikes! You better hope they have a defibrillator around here."

Jenkins replied "It is sugar that kills you, not meat and fat. There are essential amino acids, so you should eat protein. There are essential fatty acids, so you should eat fat. But there is no such thing as an

essential carbohydrate. You should eat like a grizzly bear: eat meat, fruits, nuts and vegetables, but stay away from bread.”

Sally rolled her eyes. “Oooh, tell us more, Mister Science. What is that biscuit made of? Acai berries?”

Jenkins lifted his shirt to show off his six-pack. “Feel free to borrow one of my abs. I have extra.”

“Oh please. Put your shirt down. There are people eating,” replied Sally.

Just then, both of their cell phones buzzed. It was a text from their boss, Mr. Sur.

The text simply said, “Let’s watch the Cavaliers play at 7pm at Bennie’s.” This was the secret code for meeting at an abandoned gas station outside of Muncie.

The gas station had been abandoned since the 1970's. It was named "Jet's Oil Lube." Elton John had a song named "Bennie and the Jets." Hence, "Bennie's" was the code name for the gas station. When Sally and Jenkins arrived, there was a 1968 Chevelle Nomad Station Wagon and a 1981 Plymouth Reliant K in the parking lot. The station wagon meant that Bucky and Trey were there. The Plymouth Reliant K meant that Mr. Sur was there.

Sally Jo lifted a small metal plate by the front door and exposed a piece of glass. Sally placed her right eye near the glass. A red light scanned her eye and the door was unlocked. Jenkins and Sally walked in. They walked past the abandoned cash register into the garage. They walked down to the pit where they used to do oil changes. They opened the metal door at the bottom of the pit. There was an elaborate 2000 square foot log cabin room with 12 computer screens, a stocked bar, luxurious furniture and a 10-foot conference

table. It was the ultimate man-cave. This was Mr. Sur's private office, aka the "Cave." People drove past this gas station all the time and had no idea of the luxurious, high-tech headquarters in the basement.

Mr. Sur was a billionaire but liked to keep a low-profile. So, he drove a Plymouth Reliant K. Twelve years prior, his daughter was abducted and killed by a global child sex-trafficking cult known as the Lords of Brimstone. Mr. Sur vowed to bring them down, so he recruited an elite team of military contractors. In other words, everybody in his man-cave under the gas station was part of his team.

"Well look, it's the whole Hee-Haw gang!" said Sally Jo.

Bucky and Trey got up to hug Sally. Bucky replied "Honey, you got that right. I'm a pickin' and Trey's a grinning!"

As Trey hugged Sally, he turned to Bucky and said "What do you mean I am greening? Did I miss an Amedican joke again?"

Bucky rolled his eyes and said “Don’t worry, Comrade. I will let you borrow my Hee-Haw DVDs. C’mon, everybody take a seat at the table. This is a time-sensitive operation, and the clock is ticking.”

Mr. Sur stood up to hug Sally Jo and Jenkins.

“Mr. Sur, if the goal is to be an undercover billionaire, you might want to trade in your Plymouth Reliant K for a Camry. You are actually standing out more than you are blending in,” said Jenkins.

“Hmm. I guess you’re right. It’s not 1980 anymore. Noted. Everyone take a seat and watch screen number three.”

Bucky turned on screen 3.