

CAUTION! Reading this book may lead to irreversible consequences: brain development, and random acts of kindness. These stories do possess addictive properties. They are for those who want a peek at the kaleidoscope of human nature.

Good Night, Sleep Tight, Sweet Dreams: Bedtime Stories and More

By Michael Kugel

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Bedtime Stories & More



Artwork by Jeff Perdziak

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PRINT ISBN: 978-1-64718-682-1 EPUB ISBN: 978-1-64718-800-9 MOBI ISBN: 978-1-64718-801-6

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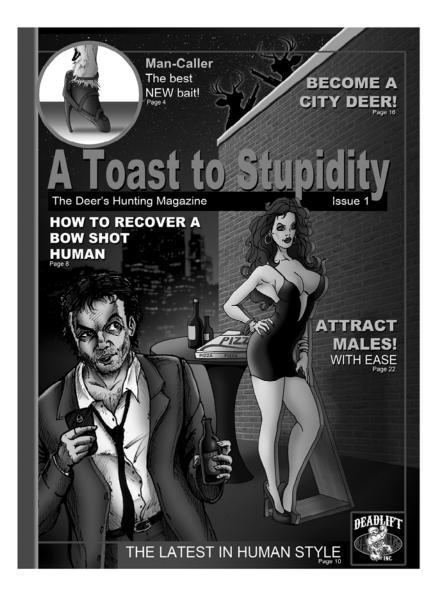
Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida.

Printed on acid-free paper.

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BookLocker.com, Inc. 2020

First Edition



"Well, Sonny, sit back, relax, and listen to the story that I'm going to tell you. It is about choices, celebration of life, and one widely enjoyed activity that some love very much. Mostly though, this story is about making sound, well-thought-out decisions that, in the short and sometimes even the long run, could affect our lives and often those around us. First though, I must say that events such as the ones that I am about to enlighten you with have been happening for hundreds of years; however, this particular story took place only a few months ago.

"It was early autumn, and millions of leaves on thousands of trees in the forest had just started to turn the shades of red, orange, various and vellow which distinguishes that time of the year as the most colorful of all. The night air turns a little cooler and a bit crisper, as the moon descends from the sky earlier and earlier. In the mornings, the fog lazily drifts through the underbrush of the forest, and engulfs open fields and knolls, while various species of birds merrily chirp away, as some of them get ready for their annual journey south for the winter, providing a melody of sorts for all other creatures to wake up and start their day.

"In what was considered to be one of the nicer neighborhoods of the forest lived a family of deer. It was a typical nuclear family that is so common (although slowly becoming rather uncommon) in today's modern world, made up of a buck – the head of the household, a doe – his wife, and their two and a half fawns – the half being the one she was expecting in another three months or so.

"While they were not the richest family in the forest (that title belonging to the bald eagle, whose royalties from the depiction of his image added up into the millions), they certainly lived comfortably and, on occasion, even helped those who were less fortunate.

"Quite often, or just occasionally – depending on which of the two parental units of the family one was inclined to believe – they engaged in various family activities such as picking berries, relaxing by large oak trees, frolicking around grassy knolls, and, sometimes, dodging cars (especially on dark curvy roads in the middle of the night). They also enjoyed shopping, movies, and ice cream socials.

"However, there was one activity that Arnold, the buck, enjoyed more than anything else in the world. The opportunity for it came only once a year and he always looked forward to it. His good friend Geary, a buck that resided in the same neighborhood with his own family, always joined him, and, more often than not, they managed to have a great time, even if the main objective of the activity was not accomplished. That's right, Sonny, it was almost open season, and both Arnold and Geary were avid hunters.

"They completed the hunters' safety class just as soon as they were old enough to do so, and were always the first in line to renew their hunter's licenses. For these two bucks, this was truly an exciting time of the year, and both felt that it was nice to get away from the laid back, relaxing, and non-chaotic environment of the forest. It was also nice to spend some time with a good friend, rub the antlers together, and get some male bonding time under their belts. Even preparing for these expeditions was a fun way to spend the time.

"During the summer, a couple of months prior to the hunting season, Arnold bought a new shotgun. It was a Remington 1100 semi-automatic with a hair trigger and a loophole scope with a laser sight mounted on top. Arnold practically drooled every time he opened the gun case and adored his newest toy. He might have been a grown deer, but he still loved toys. They were just a little more expensive than the ones he had in fawnhood. Hunting season could not come fast enough for Arnold.

"Geary, trying not to be outdone by his friend, purchased a new weapon as well. He bought a slightly used rifle that he upgraded himself, and wound up with a Savage 270 Winchester Magnum with a bipod and a 7x32 bullet drop compensating scope. He loved his new toy almost as much as he loved his adoring wife.

"A week before hunting season started, they went to the local store for supplies. The Great City Hunter catered to all kinds of outdoor enthusiasts. One could find items such as tents, hunting clothes to stay warm during the chilly temperatures and for camouflage; kayaks, canoes and oars, fishing poles and lines, bait, all kinds of guns, ammunition and weapon cleaning supplies; knives, wood, bear traps, wolf repellents, salt lick fish, and various other lures, and a whole lot of other supplies that one might require on an adventurous (or not so stimulating) trip. Arnold and Geary purchased all of their necessary supplies at a great price.

"To make the store even more appealing to customers, the management constructed a simulated city block and major roadway right in the middle of the store. The simulation depicted a typical city street complete with discarded wastes on the sidewalk, polluted air, bumper to bumper traffic, and angry pedestrians pushing their way through the crowd. Speakers, hidden within the realistically painted Stvrofoam cars and cardboard buildinas, broadcasted typical sounds of a morning commute – blaring horns, screeching tires, and ear-piercing shouts containing descriptive verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and occasional nouns. It was a playground for adults, and Arnold and Gearv resembled two fawns in a candy store!

"The first day of open season had finally arrived. Arnold and his friend met at the edge of the forest that evening. 'I thought this day would never come!' They both wore backpacks containing all of their supplies and had their weapons slung over their shoulder. They were already wearing the camouflage clothes they purchased – jeans, Tshirts, sneakers, and baseball caps. They even bathed twice a day, every day, for the last week, and shaved to make their faces blend in a little better. Arnold had a fashionable goatee on his face, while Geary sported a closely cropped beard.

"Geary adjusted his backpack and rifle. 'You can say that again! I can't wait to test out my new toy.' They bumped antlers and without any further delays headed for the big city. According to the rumor mill, there was a lot of great game to be hunted there and they could hardly wait to see it for themselves.

"Geary spoke up again as they were making their way to their destination at an excited pace. 'Hey Arnie think you'll finally get that elusive one this year? You've been trying to get one of those big ones to put on your wall for like ... what ... almost ten years now?' Arnold just shook his head in frustration.

"Sonny, more than anything in this world, Arnold wanted to mount the head of one of his kills – a head that he could be proud of and make all his hunter friends jealous. He even had a taxidermist on speed dial and a place above his fireplace picked out. Amazingly enough, he managed to convince his wife that it was a good idea. It took him a long time to have her agree that it would add a certain amount of charm and prestige to the ambiance of the room. Every year he looked forward to hunting season and the possibility of finally getting The One. However, year after year, none of his kills were worthy to be placed above the prestigious mantle, and he was becoming increasingly frustrated and disappointed. Arnold felt even more pressure to get one on that particular night because due to family constraints, he was not going to be able to make another trip into the city this year.

"It wasn't until after the sun had set that they reached their destination. The hunter's stand was located on the roof of a two-story building overlooking the back alley in the middle of one of the city's seediest neighborhoods. The back door of a bar called The Drunken Buffoon opened into the alley and was the primary source of game for these two friends.

"Before climbing onto the roof, they quickly unpacked some of their supplies and set up the first lure: - a voluptuous mannequin cut-out of a beautiful, buxom, bigbreasted blond, and they leaned her against the wall opposite their rooftop stand. Next, they walked halfway down the alley and hung pizza slices, several chicken wings, and a slice of salt lick fish. 'Nothing goes so well with beer as something salty,' Geary said with a grin on his face. Arnold could not agree more. 'Although, when the humans get drunk as much as the ones in this bar do, pizza and wings are just as good - if not better.' Geary could not argue with that valid point. Arnold then pulled out a brandnew spray bottle. 'It's vanilla - one of the most attractive scents to men. It's a natural aphrodisiac, libido enhancer, and stress reducer. Gets them really riled up, and works like a charm every time.' He quickly sprayed the perfume oil throughout the alley.

"They both looked closely at the picture of the young lady. After a few moments, they shrug their shoulders and shook their heads. 'I just don't get it. What's the big attraction that all these males have for someone who looks like this? Oh well, as long as it works. Good for us, bad for them!' With that said Arnold slapped his friend on the shoulder and they both had a good laugh. Then they climbed up to the roof, unpacked the rest of their gear, and settled into the stand. Now, all they had to do was wait.

"It was just after midnight when the first male walked out of the back door of the bar. He sauntered up to the wall opposite the door, and unzipped his pants to relieve himself.

"Like clockwork. Never fails,' Arnold whispered to his friend as he looked over the prey through his scope. 'This one has relatively small ears though.'

"'It's alright,' Geary whispered back, 'we can still put his other parts to good use.' They watched him finish, and start to go back inside. Suddenly he turned and lifted up his head, as if trying to get a scent of something mesmerizing. The two friends could clearly see him take a few deep breaths – he was definitely being drawn to the smell. After following it for a few feet, he saw her – a beautiful woman scandalously dressed and giving a flirtatious look. He almost floated to her with a big grin stretching across his face. Her intoxicating perfume waffled across the alley and he knew exactly what he wanted. With mounting excitement, he stopped just a few feet in front of her and pursed his lips to whistle his appreciation of her looks when everything suddenly went black.

"Nice shot,' Arnold exclaimed as Geary lowered his gun. His first kill of the season was pretty easy indeed. This male specimen, that they quickly bagged and tagged, was too intoxicated to see the difference between a real person and a lure, made the wrong decision to come and harass some unsuspecting female in a back alley, and put himself in their kill zone. 'Well,' Geary answered, 'if they're drunk enough to fall for that trap, then why make it any harder on us? I can sit here all night and pick off their dumb...' Geary quickly stopped expressing his opinions of the intoxicated humans as another male emerged into the alley and proceeded to the same spot as the previous one. Neither one of the deer wanted to make too much noise and possibly scare off their next prey.

"After finishing his business, quite sloppily too, the human began to return to the bar when all of a sudden he saw it. His salivary glands went wild and his stomach rumbled again as his eyes went wide with the amazement at his luck. Starving for the last several hours because he spent all of his money on beer, the last of which was still awaiting his return inside the bar, he drooled at the food just dangling there by the door. He wasn't sure which one to bite into first. The fish looked quite inviting and he took a lick of that. The pizza smelled really good and he took a ravenous bite, and then another. It was absolutely delicious.

"While it was going to be a slightly more difficult shot for the two hunters, he was still well within their kill zone. 'Hold on,' Geary whispered to Arnold as the trigger on his rifle was about to be pulled. 'He has a really small face. Have to let this one go – he's too young. I bet he's drinking in there with a fake ID.'

"Yeah, you're right,' Arnold acknowledged. He slowly set his rifle back down and watched as the famished kid finished the slice of pizza, two chicken wings, and licked the fish for another five minutes. Then he looked around as if something spooked him, and quickly went back inside.

"For the next hour Arnold and Geary sat in their stand, sipping water, chewing grass sandwiches, making small talk, and joking around to pass the time. It was a great night to be in the city, and they were both enjoying themselves very much.

"It didn't take too long for another male to come out. He stretched for a bit as if he just woke up, shook himself as if a chill ran down his back, and then proceeded to cough so forcefully that the two deer seriously thought a lung was

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going to come popping out at any second. Eventually the subject of their interest managed to get that respiratory problem under control. He looked around, pulled out a lighter, and lit a cigarette that was dangling between his lips. After taking a few deep drags, he proceeded to walk over to a slightly different spot on the opposite wall. He finished his chore while still coughing from time to time and began to return to the bar as if the alley was no different on that night than any other. He was totally oblivious to the cutout, the perfume, and the food. Arnold suddenly realized that the reason this male was not going to fall for any of their lures was because he could not smell anything at all. He was sure that most foods probably taste very bland to him as well. It looked as if this one was going to get away as the human reached for the doorknob and began to pull open the door.

"Without wasting another second, Arnold grabbed the whistle that dangled around his neck and blew into it as hard as he could. A very soft and soothing female voice emanated from it and echoed off the walls of the alley. 'Ooooouuuuu' came the intoxicating sound, followed by a deep breath, and a light giggle that could make most any human male's heart skip a beat. The man in the alley heard those sounds and froze mid-step. He let go of the doorknob and looked down the alley to find where the engaging sounds had come from. He heard it again and squinted his eyes trying to see the source of that alluring voice. Unable to see anything yet, he turned towards the end of the alley and slowly began to walk. Before long he saw her - a big breasted woman with the sweetest voice that he had ever heard. His heart rate doubled as he came closer and closer because she was absolutely drop dead gorgeous. Of course, it took only another five seconds for him to drop dead but he was not gorgeous.

"One for me, and now there's one for you,' Geary said as Arnold lowered his shotgun. 'He's a plump one, too.' Arnold

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smiled at the prospect of all the chili, jerky, steaks, and burgers he and his family will now be able to make and sell for a large profit to the bear and wolf families that live on the other side of the forest. However, the ultimate prize that he came to the city for still eluded him. "Yeah, but his ears are just not big enough,' Arnold complained as he tagged and bagged his latest kill with the help of his friend. 'I have a funny feeling that this year I will be going home without one of those big ones yet again.' Geary tried to sympathize and reassure that the night was not yet over, but they both knew that the sun would rise in a few hours and that would mean the end of their hunting trip. The really good ones were usually spotted much earlier.

"Geary noticed that Arnold's shoulders were stooped and he was a lot less talkative as they returned to their stand. The next two hours were spent in relative quiet. There were a few more humans that made an appearance in the alley that night, but they were all either females, which held no interest for these particular hunters, or way too young, and shooting a human less than twenty-one years of age was illegal.

"As the first rays of the sun began to lift the night sky, Arnold suggested that it was time to pack up and go home. Both of them felt that there was not going to be any more game to hunt on that particular night, and besides, the bar had closed and they were getting pretty tired.

"Just as the two friends were about to start descending from their stand, a human male stumbled into the alley from the street. He swayed from side to side, and seemed very indecisive about what he wanted to do next. Finally, after tripping twice over his own feet and nearly falling, he managed to make his way halfway down the alley, lean against the wall with his forehead, and unzip his pants. Still on the roof, the two friends could hear him singing softly under his breath and from time to time yell out some slurred

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gibberish. After finishing up and finding the task of pulling the zipper back up too difficult, the strange male disengaged himself from the wall, took a few seconds to regain his balance, looked around sheepishly to see if anyone was watching, and began to stumble back the way he had come.

"Nonchalantly, Arnold took his shotgun and examined the prey through the scope. He saw a fully grown specimen, but decided not to bother with this one, especially since he was walking away from them. It would have been an extremely difficult shot at best. Suddenly he froze in place and squealed in delight.

"Geary,' he whispered as fast as he could, 'check out this one. Look at his ears! They're huge! That, my friend, is an eight-pointer.' Geary picked up his scope, which he had already detached from his rifle, and examined the male in the alley. His ears, he saw, were certainly rather large, and he knew that his friend was nearly shaking with excitement. However, the guy was just a bit too far. He had to be lured to the proximal part of the alley.

"How do we get him to notice the cutout?' Geary whispered back. 'He can't see her from there, and the other ones ate all the food. I'm pretty sure the spray has dissipated as well, and I packed the whistle at the bottom of my bag. I'll never get it out in time before he walks away.' He could see Arnold biting his lower lip. They could both see that the human had finished up what he needed to do, and after taking a few deep breaths, continued to slowly walk away in the opposite direction. Panic and frustration began to take over the two bucks, but suddenly Arnold remembered something. He quickly looked over at his friend and threw his own pack at him.

"I totally forgot that I have one more bait. Bought it a few years ago and have never used it. Don't even know if it will work. Right in that outside pocket there. Yeah, the high heel shoes,' he said without taking his eyes off the prize and not even trying to be quiet anymore. 'Put them on quickly and walk the edge of the roof. Hurry, please!' Geary did as he was asked as fast as he could.

"Click, click, click, click. The sound reverberated through the alley. Click, click, click. Geary was swinging his hips back and forth as he walked the entire length of the edge of the roof, back and forth, doing his best to produce the sexiest clicking possible, hoping and praying that the specimen that his friend has long been searching for will hear the high heels and come back to their end of the alley. He held his breath in anticipation and saw that Arnold was doing the same thing.

"After several seconds, which seemed like much longer to the two animals, the human stopped in mid-stride and turned around. A look of curiosity was clearly etched on his face. He stood there for what seemed like forever, apparently trying to decide what he should do next.

"Click, click, click. Finally, the male took a few cautious steps toward their end of the alley, but then stopped as if he was reconsidering. Click, click, click. The sound continued to call out to him. He stood there for a while with his head bowed down low, frowning, and rocking from his toes back to his heels. Then he pulled his hands out of his pants pockets, holding a bunch of bills in one of them. He quickly counted how much money he had, and then, as a grungy grin spread across his face, began to make his way to the other end of the alley as quickly as his drunken legs would carry him. In no time at all he saw the strikingly beautiful blond, and right away knew, without a shadow of a doubt, what she was, and that he made the right decision. She was the most exotic woman he had ever seen, and exuded the promise of undulating excitement and endless fun. "On top of the roof, Geary was frozen in one place, with one foot in front of the other, staring down at the big-eared male, too scared to make any more movements in fear of scaring off the skittish prey. Eventually, however, he did shift his eyes and glanced over at his friend. Arnold was pressing the butt of his shotgun hard into his shoulder and looking intensely through the scope with unfaltering concentration. Down in the alley, the male was quickly approaching the cutout, and making some kind of grunting noise. Geary had never experienced so much tension before a kill, and was exhaling ever so slowly when he heard his friend quietly say 'Come on. Come to papa. Yeah, that's it.' After several seconds, 'Oh, you are on my wall.'

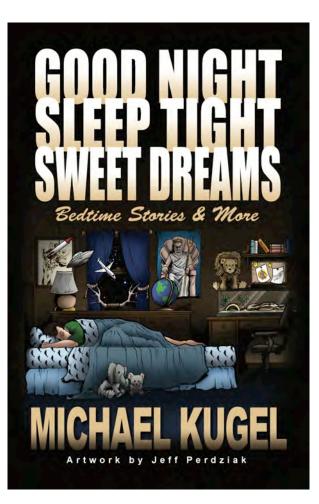
"Sonny, I guess that what I have been trying to say is that irresponsible drinking can lead to very poor decision making - plain and simple. Often, we do or say (or both) very stupid things when inebriated, and such behavior may lead to dire consequences that, at times, may not be easily apologized for or reversed. Quite often those occurrences are simply inexcusable. Many humans have died because they, or someone else, made one of those poor decisions, and deer had nothing to do with it. So, when you are old enough, drink in moderation, and continue to make sensible choices. However, if by some chance you find yourself well beyond the point of pleasant intoxication, stay indoors until vour mind returns to a normal state of sensibility, and don't forget that until that happens, make sure to use indoor plumbing. Of course, there is also an option of not drinking at all. I promise that no one will think any less of you. Who knows, you might even earn someone's admiration and respect. In other words, make a decision you can live with. Oh, and, also, don't smoke.

"Well, Sonny, that's it for this one. I hope this story gave you something to ponder. For now, get a good night's sleep. Depending on your future decisions, that may not always be

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possible. Oh, and remember, the restroom is at the end of the hallway on the left.

"Good night, sleep tight, and sweet dreams."



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