

# THIRD WINDOW FROM THE RIGHT

by Scott Mullen

Copyright © MMXXI by Scott Mullen, All rights reserved.

**CAUTION:** Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

**RIGHTS RESERVED:** All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

**PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS:** All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Heuer Publishing LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Heuer Publishing LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC.

*Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.*

**AUTHOR CREDIT:** All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this Work must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this Work. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

**PUBLISHER CREDIT:** Whenever this Work is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: ***Produced by special arrangement with Heuer Publishing LLC.***

**COPYING:** Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Heuer Publishing LLC.

HEUER PUBLISHING LLC  
P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406  
TOLL FREE (800) 950-7529 • FAX (319) 368-8011

# THIRD WINDOW FROM THE RIGHT

by Scott Mullen

**SYNOPSIS:** A woman eating her lunch on a park bench is surprised when a strange man approaches her and gives her an envelope of money, but then he explains the circumstances.

**TIME:** Present.

**SETTING:** Park bench.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(1 female, 1 male)*

KATE (f).....prim and initially quiet but willing to engage. *(64 lines)*

HENRY (m).....socially awkward. *(65 lines)*

**CAST NOTE:** The characters can be any age over 20 but should be relatively close in age.

## SET

A park bench.

## PROPS

- manila envelope stuffed with something that could be money
- thermos
- crumpled paper bag
- watch (Kate), though she could alternatively look at her cell phone

**AT START:** *KATE sits on a bench, primly sipping from a thermos, a crumpled paper bag next to her. HENRY approaches, nervous, manila envelope in his hand. He slows, then speeds up, and passes the bench... then stops. Galvanizing himself, he pivots and practically throws himself on the bench next to KATE.*

**HENRY:** Oh my God. Wow. I'm here. It feels like the world is spinning.  
Is it spinning?

**KATE:** Are you okay?

**HENRY:** Say that again.

**KATE:** Are you okay?

**HENRY:** Your voice is just like I imagined it.

*KATE sighs and screws the top back on her thermos. Reaches for the bag.*

**HENRY:** No, don't go. Please. You need to understand—this is a moment for me. A big moment. I've thought about this a lot, what I would do, what I would say. But this is real. There you are. I've never been so close. To you. My God. Your pores—they're huge.

**KATE:** What?

**HENRY:** And your freckles. You have... so many freckles. I thought you might, but now that I'm here—wow.

**KATE:** I'm leaving.

**HENRY:** No. Please. I didn't mean to say that out loud. Okay, I actually did. Because I promised myself I'd be honest, and say whatever was on my mind. That I'd just be me.

**KATE:** Who are you?

**HENRY:** I'm Henry. I live right up there, across the square. Third floor, third window from the right. That's me. Henry Sturgeon. You've heard of me? No, no of course you haven't. I'm a writer, that's what I do, sit up there all day and write. Well, that's what I should do, but I'm a writer, so I look out the window a lot. And I see you, right here, on this bench, every day between noon and one. Eating lunch from your brown paper bag, which is adorable, by the way. Sandwich, apple, thermos containing, I'm guessing maybe tea? Something brown.

**KATE:** You can see that from your window.

**HENRY:** Well, with binoculars. Did I mention I had binoculars? They are very good binoculars. I bought them to look at birds, but there are only like four kinds of birds around here. So I started looking at people. And now, pretty much just you.

**KATE:** So you're a stalker.

**HENRY:** No-no-no-no. No. That's not—no. I've never followed you or anything. Not that you're not stalk-worthy, I'm sure there are men who—but no, that's not me. You're more—my muse.

**KATE:** Your muse.

**HENRY:** No matter how bad things are going, how little writing I've done in the morning, I know that five days a week, Monday through Friday, you're going to be on the bench, eating your lunch. It's the one part of my day I really look forward to. You give me this sort of... creative... jolt that gets me through the day. And then, once, I even saw you on a Saturday. It was a miracle. I was really kind of depressed, really having problems with a scene, but then I looked up, and there you were. Right here on this bench.

**KATE:** Yeah. I remember that Saturday.

**HENRY:** You weren't eating lunch. You just sat here.

**KATE:** Yes.

**HENRY:** You just looked really sad. I almost came down to make sure you were okay. Almost. No, I'm lying. I wanted to, but it just wasn't going to happen. And I'm sorry about that.

**KATE:** What do you want, Henry?

*HENRY thrusts the envelope at her. She takes it.*

**HENRY:** This is for you. Open it.

*KATE looks inside. Reaches in. Ruffles through the bills.*

**KATE:** Holy crap.

**HENRY:** Three thousand dollars.

*KATE hands the envelope back to him.*

**KATE:** I'm not a prostitute, Henry.

**HENRY:** No-no-no-no. No!

**KATE:** Gentlemen don't sit down next to girls they don't know and give them envelopes of money, unless it's for something improper.

**HENRY:** This is going all wrong. Listen. I made a bet with myself.

**KATE:** Ah. And you lost?

**HENRY:** No, I won. The bet was that if my play won this contest, I'd give you half the prize money. And to do that, I'd have to come down here and talk to you. Even though every cell of my body is screaming for me not to.

**KATE:** Am I that scary?

**HENRY:** Yes. I mean... yes. And it's not because you're lovely, though you are. I mean, you're not traditionally beautiful, your eyes are a little too far apart, and you had tuna for lunch, so your breath... and you really do have large pores... I should shut up now, right?

**KATE:** No, keep going, it's refreshing.

**HENRY:** It's just that I imagined all these things about you that I wrote about.

**KATE:** You wrote about—?

**HENRY:** Oh yes, my play is about you. About you, here, on the bench, and I get the courage to come down, and we just talk, and talk and talk, for about 10 minutes. Now that I'm describing it, I'm not sure how I won. But in the play, it's not all awkward like this—instead I'm charming, and you're charmed, and in the end, we walk off together.

**KATE:** Was there kissing?

**HENRY:** There was kissing.

**KATE:** And then what happened?

**HENRY:** Well, nothing. The play was over.

**KATE:** But you must have imagined something.

**HENRY:** I suppose they live happily ever after.

**KATE:** Because they're perfect for each other.

**HENRY:** Yes.

**KATE:** Totally randomly.

**HENRY:** Well—

**KATE:** He doesn't know anything about her, other than she's this girl on a bench, and yet, miraculously, somehow she's his soulmate.

**HENRY:** When you say it like that—

**KATE:** It sounds sort of silly?

**HENRY:** Yes.... But it did win a prize.

**KATE:** I mean, he's a guy, coming down to talk to a girl, he doesn't know the first thing about her, he doesn't know what her name is—you don't, do you?

**HENRY:** In the play I call her Greta.

**KATE:** That's not my name, Henry. That's not even close to being my name. And you don't know—I could have a boyfriend, I could be a lesbian, I could be a psychopath. There could be blood in my thermos.

**HENRY:** It didn't look like blood.

**KATE:** Maybe I dyed it brown, to fool you.

**HENRY:** ...Did you?

**KATE:** No. Hey, you're right. Just saying whatever is on your mind is very freeing. Does Greta say what is on her mind?

**HENRY:** Sometimes.

**KATE:** I'm guessing there was a lot of clever banter.

**HENRY:** There was.

**KATE:** As he wooed her. A lot of back-and-forth. Some jazzy wordplay.

**HENRY:** Yes.

**KATE:** I'm not a banter girl, Henry.

**HENRY:** You're doing fine.

**KATE:** A banter girl doesn't eat lunch alone on a park bench every single day.

**HENRY:** It's endearing.

**KATE:** It's pathetic. Do you know why I'm out here, Henry? Because it's my lunch break, and I could eat at my desk, but my job is awful and the office smells like garlic and feet. Not my feet—other people's feet. An office shouldn't smell like feet. So this is the highlight of my day, just getting outside, in the fresh air. And I sit here, and I eat my lunch, and I drink my tea, and I imagine what's going on inside those windows. Even your window Henry. Third floor, third window from the right.

**HENRY:** You do?

**KATE:** I imagined a young couple, in the city, both working jobs so that they can afford to live there, with a view of this park. She gets up early to make him coffee, but finds that he already made it. So they drink it together, looking out at the city. Seeing their futures together.

**HENRY:** That's nice.

**KATE:** And then they go off to work. Holding hands. Until the very last minute when they have to separate, and go their own way. Waiting, just waiting, for the moment at the end of the day, when she comes out of her office, and he's standing there, waiting for her, and she takes his hand again.

**HENRY:** Wow. Do they have names?

**KATE:** Vincenzo. And Kate. That's me, Henry. I'm Kate. I dream of living there. Being that girl. Instead of living with my parents, in the room I grew up in. You must be doing well as a playwright to afford a place like that.

**HENRY:** Not really. It's rent-controlled.

**KATE:** I envy your rent control, Henry. I would kill for some rent control.

**HENRY:** I'd invite you to live with me, but I sense that would be inappropriate.

**KATE:** Wildly.

**HENRY:** Sorry.

**KATE:** Do you have a hot tub?

**HENRY:** No. My entire apartment is only one hundred and ninety two square feet. I have a Murphy bed. A Murphy bed that fits one.

**KATE:** Well that's not going to work.

**HENRY:** I do have a Mr. Coffee.

**KATE:** Cream and sugar?

**HENRY:** Absolutely.

**KATE:** Hmm. Do you prefer the right side of the bed, or the left?

**HENRY:** I've never had a bed with two sides.

**KATE:** Do you fart, Henry?

**HENRY:** I... No. I mean, I wouldn't, with other people in the room.

**KATE:** I fart, Henry.

**HENRY:** You do?

**KATE:** I just let them rip. And I've been told I snore.

**HENRY:** Really?

**KATE:** Do you snore?

**HENRY:** I... don't know. I'm asleep.

**KATE:** Sometimes I crack my knuckles—just because they're there. Sometimes I talk with my mouth full. Sometimes, if I'm really hungry, and I really like something, I'll reach over with my fork and take it off the plate of the person I'm with. What do you think about that?

**HENRY:** That's.... Wow.

**KATE:** I'll bet Greta was perfect.

**HENRY:** Pretty much.

**KATE:** Never farted.

**HENRY:** No.

**KATE:** I'm not Greta, Henry.

**HENRY:** No. No, you're not.

**KATE:** And you're not Vincenzo.

**HENRY:** Was he taller?

**KATE:** So if you don't want to give me that money, I'll understand.

*HENRY looks at her.*

**HENRY:** I do. It's yours. A bet's a bet, right? A promise is a promise.

**KATE:** No strings attached?

**HENRY:** Not a single string.

**KATE:** Because three thousand dollars might not sound like much to you—

**HENRY:** It actually is—

**KATE:** But it could change my life.

*HENRY looks at her again.*

**HENRY:** Good. Change it.

**KATE:** Even if it means that I move away. To chase another life.

**HENRY:** If that makes you happy—yes.

*HENRY gives her the envelope. She takes it. She holds his hand for a moment... then lets it go. She smells the envelope. Then sees the time on her watch.*

**KATE:** I have to get back to work. But thank you, Henry. I'm sorry I couldn't be your Greta. She sounds like a wonderful girl.

**HENRY:** She wasn't real.

**KATE:** Still.

*KATE gets up.*

**HENRY:** Back to the feet?



**KATE:** Back to the feet indeed.

**HENRY:** Don't sell yourself short. You are very good at banter.

**KATE:** Listen. Tomorrow, I'm going to sit on the bench over there.

**HENRY:** ...Over there?

**KATE:** I'm pretty sure you won't be able to see me from your window.

**HENRY:** No. I won't.

**KATE:** Not even with your binoculars. Even if you lean out.

**HENRY:** I don't think it's possible.

**KATE:** Sorry... I guess you'll just have to come down, then.

*KATE smiles at HENRY, and walks off. HENRY leans back. And smiles. Blackout.*

**THE END**

DO NOT COPY