

The Tears of Mr. Truhart

By and Based on the Books of Robert J. Cormier (www.thefaithkit.org)
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Everybody knew that Mr. Truhart was rich, really rich. He had invented some sort of a thinking machine that was light years ahead of any other kind, and now he had a huge operation, and it seemed that the whole world worked for him, but that was OK because he treated people really well, and he was nice to them in person.

Because Mr. Truhart was so nice, Sally was surprised but not shocked when he invited her to lunch in order to recognize her five faithful years with the company. “Just come to work,” he told her, “and a limo will take you up to a house in the hills. I’ll see you when you get there.”

Sally had been with the company for five years, and she had worked hard. Actually, her life was hard. She was a young widow with three small children, and she had not been left with much.

The day came and the limo was waiting and the ride was quite beautiful. Sally had never been to these hills, which were covered with a forest, and the road climbed and turned providing wonderful views in many places.

But nothing was so beautiful as the view from near the top. That’s where the house was, if you could call it a house. It was more like a little village of spaces with towers, and balconies, and windows everywhere. It was surrounded by gardens with paths and pools and places for sports.

Mr. Truhart was waiting at the front door, and he led Sally into a big foyer that opened up in three directions that included a grand staircase that was straight ahead on the right. (On the left there was a spacious hall that led to somewhere where there was lots of light.) Mr. Truhart asked Sally if she would like a tour, and she said sure, and they walked off to the right into the dining room. It was already elegantly set for lunch. They continued to the left into an enormous kitchen, thoroughly modern, and the food that was already cooking added to the impression. Continuing to the left, the kitchen led to a less formal room for eating with a view of the vast backyard, and this same room opened onto a deck that looked out over this backyard. In the distance there were more hills, bigger hills, and these too were covered with

forest. Continuing to the left, one now went from the right side of the house to left, and there was the living room. The living room was filled with the most comfortable looking furniture and, the way it was laid out, you could look to the right at the hills, or to the left at a big and obviously working fireplace.

The upstairs was no less beautiful. All the rooms were big and airy, and there were halls that went like bridges into the towers, which were empty now but might be used for anything.

Everything was coordinated and Sally loved the style. The only thing, she noticed, was that there was almost nothing on any wall.

The tour led back to the dining room where, now, the food was waiting. Mr. Truhart thanked Sally for her years of faithful service. He asked her opinion about the company, and what might be done better; and he asked her about her family. Then he asked her about the house. Of course, she loved the house.

“Well, it’s yours,” he said.

“Excuse me.”

“The house,” he said again, “is yours.”

“I’m sorry, sir, I really don’t understand.”

“I’d like you to have this house, Sally. I want to give it to you.”

“Give it to me?”

“That’s right. You can have it immediately.”

“I’m sorry, sir, I just don’t understand.”

“It’s really quite simple, Sally,” said Mr. Truhart. “I’ve done really well. I have so much to share. I want to share it. I want to share some of it with you.”

“Why me?”

“Why not you?”

“Why not? Because you don’t really know me. Because I am no one to you. Because I’ve never done anything for you.” And then Sally got bold and said, “and I am not going to do any more for you than my job.”

Mr. Truhart smiled at that. “Listen, Sally, he said, “I’m very happy with my life. I am not looking for anything from you. I just want to share what I have. You may not think I know you too well, or maybe you think that I have the wrong idea about you, but I know what I know and I chose you because of what I know. And I’m not forgetting anybody else I ought to be helping.”

“This is all too much,” said Sally, “and even if I took it how could I pay the taxes? How could I pay to heat it?!”

“It’s all been thought of, Sally. The house comes with an endowment that will easily cover any expenses you will ever incur. I’d be happy to show you.”

“This is just too much,” interrupted Sally. “It’s too much. Why would you do this... asking for nothing? Who am I to you?”

“You are someone who would love this house, Sally. And you are worth having it if only you will accept it.”

To this there was no response. After an uncomfortable pause, Sally, who had lost her appetite anyway, said, “I think I need to go.”

Mr. Truhart asked Sally to “please, reconsider,” but when she did not answer, he chose not to press her further. He called for the limo that took her back to work. He waved good-bye from the steps of the house. She did not look back.

As the car disappeared from sight, tears appeared in Mr. Truhart’s eyes.

Once again he turned to God in prayer. “Why, Lord,” he asked, “can’t I get anyone to take what I would so gladly give them?”

“Why can’t I get them to believe that it’s real?”

“All they have to do is accept it? Why is this so hard?”

“How many times do I have to be rejected?”

“Won’t I ever find anyone who will accept all I would give them?”

Having expressed himself to God, Mr. Truhart was now in a position to listen. His spirit moved, or God said, “now you know how I feel.”