

# Mike 'Hard-As' Nails and The Case of the Wandering Buck

Georgia Tuxbury





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MIKE 'HARD AS' NAILS AND THE CASE OF THE WANDERING BUCK

CAST

MIKE 'HARD-AS' NAILS  
JOY BUCHANAN

*Setting: MIKE's office has a desk with a chair, and to the side of the desk, another chair. The desk holds an ash tray and coffee cup as well as scattered papers and pens. An overflowing waste basket sits to the side of the desk. A hat rack stands in a corner.*

*At Rise: Rinky-tink piano music is playing. MIKE sits, feet on his desk. He swings his legs off the desk, rises and, walking back and forth in front of his desk. As he speaks to the audience, music ceases.*

MIKE: *(talking tough)* Here in McAllen, a city that never sleeps...where crime never takes a holiday—not even for Valentine's Day—one man fights the forces of evil...fights for justice...fights for the common man. And he fights even harder for the common woman! That man's name is Mike Nails, Private Eye. I am that man! 'Hard-As' Nails, they call me. I investigate some pretty tough cases: the guys who don't turn off their cell phones in meetings, the people who eat at restaurant buffets and bring home doggie bags, the guys who paint graffiti on restroom walls—though I've gotten a few pretty good phone numbers that way. But I try to steer away from problems between a husband and a wife. So I didn't care to take on Joy Buchanan's case, only she was...well...so persuasive I couldn't resist. And she had a body that could haunt a man's dreams. Besides, in this business it's hard to make a dollar. So I took her case. Here's how it all happened.

*(MIKE returns to his desk and sits down while rinky-tink piano music plays. There is a knock on the door. Music ceases.)*

MIKE: Come in.

*(JOY BUCHANAN enters. She saunters over to MIKE and leans on his desk.)*

JOY: Hi, big boy. I'm Joy.

MIKE: I'm sure you are.

JOY: Joy Buchanan. Wife of Big Buck Buchanan. So called because he likes big bucks.

MIKE: (*he acts interested now*) You mean your husband is wealthy.

JOY: No. He's a deer hunter.

MIKE: A deer hunter. I see. So...why don't you have a seat? (*he motions to chair*)

JOY: I'd rather sit here. (*she sits on his desk, crossing her legs seductively*)

MIKE: What brings you to Mike 'Hard-As' Nails, Mrs. Buchanan?

JOY: You can call me Joy, Mr. Nails.

MIKE: And you can call me what everyone else does...'Hard-As.'

JOY: All right, 'Hard-Ass.'

MIKE: That's 'Hard-As,' Joy.

JOY: Of course.

MIKE: So...what brings you here?

JOY: My husband, Big Buck. I think he's seeing another woman.

MIKE: Oh, I try to steer away from cases like that. They only make hard feelings. And I just don't like to see a husband and wife break up. Marriage is something sacred.

JOY: Please, 'Hard-As,' you MUST help me. (*she leans over seductively to MIKE and bats her eyelashes*)

MIKE: Well, since you put it that way, what can I do for you?

JOY: Every Thursday night he tells me he is going to the Bingo Palace to play Bingo.

MIKE: And you don't think he is?

JOY: No, I don't. He leaves at 4 p.m. To study the cards, he says.

MIKE: That's possible.

JOY: But he doesn't return until after midnight.

MIKE: Maybe he goes out for coffee with some of the other bingo players.

JOY: And maybe you just fell off the turnip wagon.

MIKE: Okay, so you think he's fooling around.

JOY: Now you're getting it. So last Thursday I went to the Bingo Palace to find out for sure. Big Buck wasn't there.

MIKE: That's terrible.

JOY: Not really, I won twenty bucks. (*changing attitude*) But winning isn't everything. I knew then that I had lost my own Buck. Big Buck Buchanan.

MIKE: So where do you think he is on Thursday nights?

JOY: He's on South Padre Island. At Louie's Backyard. I found the VISA bills.

MIKE: So what do you want me to do?

JOY: I want you to go to Louie's Backyard this Thursday and find out who the little doe is that Big Buck is after. Get there at five.

MIKE: At five?

JOY: Knowing Big Buck, he's going for the Early Bird Special. He's as tight as the ring on a fat lady's finger.

MIKE: Do you have a photo of him so I know who I'm looking for?

JOY: No, I don't. He's camera shy.

MIKE: A lot of men are.

JOY: He's got good reason. He's as homely as a bowl of mush.

## END OF FREEVIEW

*You'll want to read and perform this show!*