

Matt Shea Books Presents:

Judge Alvin Wong

In:

'The Mouse That Roared'

PLUS

*'Lauratown And Other Short
Stories'*

AND

*'The World's Greatest Rock Star
And Other Short Stories'*

“Judge Alvin Wong in ‘The Mouse That Roared’ plus ‘Lauratown and other Short Stories’ and ‘The World’s Greatest Rock Star’ and other Short Stories,” by Matt Shea. ISBN 978-1-947532-76-2 (softcover); 978-1-947532-77-9 (eBook).

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About the Book

Matt Shea Books Presents: Judge Alvin Wong in: ‘The Mouse That Roared’ Plus ‘Lauratown And Other Short Stories’ And ‘The World’s Greatest Rock Star And Other Short Stories’ is a 3-in-1 book by author Matt Shea.

It’s the union of two successful Kindle projects with a Judge Alvin Wong story thrown in! This is Matt’s response to the many who wanted to have all of his writings available in paperback.

Our feature story, ‘*The Mouse That Roared,*’ illustrates a crossroad every teen faces somewhere in life: *What do I want to be when I grow up?*

William Randall Stokes IV is our main character — a humble young man who was cursed by being the youngest, smallest and shortest boy in his graduation class. Like any impressionable youth, our star begins his quest through trial and error *with the wrong crowd*. A rollercoaster ride that came with its share of heart aches, harsh lessons, and occasional embarrassment . . .

There was another side to the fence, however. The side where the grownups hung out *with the Bible being part of the equation*.

From there, our magnificent Creator makes His presence more prevalent with a spiritual path waiting for one William Randall Stokes IV.

The result?

Our Lord has once again performed in *mysterious ways!*

The other two stories: *Lauratown* and *The World’s Greatest Rock Star* have many stories attached to them as well. You will find them and the lessons they teach, as you go from one story to the next.

When ready, get comfortable and enjoy!

Matt Shea

Special Thanks



Ella Ray (left) and Renée Klause.

Regardless of how simple my stories appear, I still need those who assist me. If they weren't there, my stories would have peaked out as dreams, wishes and thoughts that were never to be printed. Please let me introduce two fabulous ladies who have contributed to my projects and made a difference.

Renée Klause of Artistic Xpressions has always been there for me when it comes to my writings and being a *special friend*. Her wizardry in painting and photography has already graced three of my book covers, with many more to follow. In fact, the happy golden retriever in some of the pictures is non-other than her once wonderful companion, Dolly. Most important, Renée encourages me

to stay on my path and gives wonderful ideas that often lead to a great story.

I highly recommend anyone and everyone to look up her site on Facebook. I guarantee that you'll be impressed and *she even allows viewers to contact her!*

Artistic Xpressions by Renée Klause



Ella Ray is a wonderful friend who does a meticulous job proofreading and editing. There is always an education for me when she addresses my rough drafts. Sometimes this is accompanied with a little embarrassment, *but only a little . . .*

My friend, Ella, along with Renée, also joins in on many of my radio interviews to kick things up a few notches. I'd be lost without them.

Thanks for being there for me Girls!

Matt

Are two Brattons Better Than One?



Ric Bratton



Sean "Boomer" Bratton

But of course!

Many of you are quite familiar with radio talk show host *Ric Bratton* and his national broadcast. *This Week In America* is a renowned talk show that truly covers both ends of the spectrum when it comes to interviewing amazing people who represent all walks of life — creative beings who have an interesting point of view to share with an abundance of good will attached.

The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

Have you heard about his son, *Sean*? This guy has been doing some pretty amazing stuff himself.

Most people in Fort Wayne, Indiana certainly know of this personality very well: *he's been around for over twenty years!* Sometimes you can hear him on 97.3 WMEE-FM cutting it up with Ron Mellencamp. Other times his leash is extended when he unmercifully unloads '*Boomer's Wacky World*,' a one-of-a-kind show that would definitely cause cars to pull over in traffic.

"Why?" you ask.

To further your education by learning important stuff like:

The Moron of the week-

Worse Joke Wednesday

and

Only In Indiana

That's why!

It's all fun and interesting to say the least!

(I wonder if it's time to promote Ric and Sean as the newest tag team in professional wrestling?)

Tune in to Ric and Sean when the opportunity presents itself; it will make your day!

And:

Keep up the good work, guys!

Matt

Dedication

I'd like to dedicate this compilation to Amber, my publisher's autistic daughter who graduated this year! Amber, you are a special girl with a family that loves you very much. I think it's appropriate that your confirmation verse was Philippians 4:13 — *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*



Judge Alvin Wong
in
The Mouse That
Roared

Introduction

The stocking feet of William Randall Stokes IV rested on the antique desk that dignified his bedroom. The cherished family heirloom made of polished oak and brass was a perfect fit for the room that never allowed any dust to gather. Looking around his perfect world, the sixteen-year-old studied the bed one could bounce a quarter off and smiled.

It was *here* that the conservative lad with thin black hair parted to one side found peace. A place of refuge for the dainty young man who wore the classic wire-rimmed geek glasses that all modern-day science fiction movies have come to know.

Standing at 5', 5" and weighing a flimsy one hundred and forty pounds, this harmless specimen was cursed even further. He had distinct, nervous brown eyes rivaling that of none other than Deputy Barney Fife himself! In the automotive world, he would have been the first AMC Gremlin off the assembly line.

There was more.

This cruel hand dealt by nature was knocked down a few more notches. Somewhere, someone in early childhood referred to him as *Mouse*—and the name had stuck ever since.

It was a menacing label that never allowed the humble soul to get off the ground socially. One that made others double up with uncontrollable laughter. In fact, it could

always be used endlessly, whenever anyone chose to ramble on with the *play on words game*:

It was synonymous with cheese; *a product that goes with almost any food group*. It was also affiliated with computers, what a professional photographer might ask a subject to say, what the moon was once thought to be made of, an undesirable amount of drama, etc. . . .

No one could ever argue that his life had started out with little or no chance at all.

True, the boy did have a cavalry that came in the form of a rich uncle. A strong, handsome stud who was once the local high school football star. A well-respected businessman who had the most popular car dealerships in two counties!

“Show them your real power,” he advised. “Use your brain to excel so high that you advance yourself to the next level and leave them all behind in the dust!”

The nephew did just that. In fact, *twice!*

The result?

Each time he advanced to a higher grade, he was dwarfed by his new classmates even more. Thus making him *even more mousey . . .*

Today was a new day, however, and those trials and tribulations *were to be all behind him now*.

Looking straight ahead, he marveled at the room that had just become more enriched. It now boasted an all-important document that hung perfectly centered against the wall his desk faced. It was his high school diploma; the ever-important deed that emancipated the teen who stared at it!

The ‘academic wonder boy’ was now in a trance, reflecting on the years of *hell he paid* to achieve this milestone.

The many parties he was never allowed to be invited to . . .

School dances where he couldn’t find a date . . .

Hearing loud comments in town with the name ‘Mouse’ or ‘cheese’ being exaggerated for all to hear . . .

Matt Shea

It was a long time coming, but his perseverance had finally paid off! It was now his turn to have the last laugh:

He was able to get out of prison early based on hard work and good behavior.

Suddenly, it entered his mind about the carrot that once dangled in front of him. The one he was about to receive from his rich uncle *if he graduated early with honors*. Without warning, an uncontrollable Cheshire grin with a devious undertone began to cover his face. Hand in hand, a famous quote modified to his liking played through his mind.

They won't have William Randall Stokes IV to kick around anymore!

And now our story begins.

Chapter I

It was early morning in the dusty town of Hangman, where all stood still.

This all-American town nestled in the dry plains was surely embraced by our Lord's favor. It was graced by a river, along with a few nearby lakes that boasted fish, eagles and other natural residences. In fact, one side was protected by a ridged mountain range that extended for miles.

This was truly *'home on the range'* for those who settled here. Every night, this humble town was embraced by a dark sky that revealed a galaxy of stars. A marvel that seemingly served as a heavenly canopy promising further blessings—even if clouds were passing through . . .

It was a typical morning, where God's magnificent creation would continue its pace. The summer sun would again begin its natural encroachment on this spiritual setting, a phenomenon that initially introduced itself by casting a mild hue of sunlight that triggered such sounds as chirping birds and a lone rooster. Soon a single star would be remaining, as many households would already be up and about to start their day.

It was the daily 'changing of the guard' where the animal kingdom received their wake-up call first—only to be followed by the awkwardness of the human species.

The flawed race that can't evolve unless it forgives its own kind.

Matt Shea

Off in the distance, a set of headlights could be seen. They were driving up a spiral dirt road that led to a bluff overlooking the main section of town. A once—and still—sacred outlook where many congregations prayed, worshiped and performed the sacrament of marriage. It was named Indian Pointe, with many word-of-mouth stories about Native American culture attached to it. A place that also served as a breathtaking viewpoint featured by postcards and a few nature magazines.

Soon, additional daylight exposed the brand spanking-new, American-built 4x4 pickup truck with all the bells and whistles one could ever imagine.

Then it happened.

Its lone occupant opened both side doors, as if the truck were a battleship ready to open fire. A frightening scenario that proved to hold true, as the loudest, most powerful sound system that *any* vehicle could ever pack began its assault on the unsuspecting village below.

Within milliseconds, the entire town was outside in disarray, realizing that they were under attack. In a state of panic, the locals scattered about taking shelter while trying to find where the thundering noise was coming from. An intrusion that shook homes, spilled coffee, and rattled windows.

Instinctively, all looked toward the source where the amplified fire was coming from. It was way up high on Indian Pointe, where all could see none other than William Randall Stokes IV himself; alias *Mouse*! His glistening teeth and folded arms could be seen as he watched with apparent satisfaction.

There was something wrong with this picture.

This local high school grad was never known to bother anyone, *ever*. In fact, it was *he* who was teased and picked on his entire life for being the smallest boy with the highest grades. The guy who was nicknamed ‘Mouse’ because of his non-threatening stature and cowering demeanor. A nickname he *absolutely detested* beyond words. One that he would quietly shrug off in public and cry himself asleep

over at night, cutting a deeper wound every time it was thrown at him.

One would have to ask oneself:

Q) *How could a young man just out of high school ever afford such a vehicle?*

A) *Easily! It was a 'deal' set up by his rich uncle, if he were to graduate on time with honors. A condition set for the boy who never had a father.*

It was a sight to see (and hear), with locals scratching their heads and pondering, “*What’s gotten into that boy?*”

William was now addressing the entire town of Hangman like a conductor standing tall at the pulpit. His ultra-conservative image was thrown to the wayside that morning. To make his statement even more clear, he was wearing the latest in Western fashions, complete with hat and dark shades!

This was the boy’s proclamation to the entire township. He was telling all that he had adopted *a new image*. A well thought-out presentation that would launch the career of any professional wrestler.

Judge Alvin Wong was on the scene and knew what to do. The Chinese-American man who stood at 5’, 7” was waving his arms in a downward motion in order to calm down the irate citizens. “It’s just a dumb kid saying *Hello* to everyone,” he yelled. “I’ll drive up there and see what he wants . . .”

Everyone in Hangman knew William Stokes as a good person and agreed that Alvin would yield the best results. They also knew that soon, the disturbance would come to a stop.

It did.

As the forty-seven-year-old man drove to the historical viewpoint, William wisely turned off his stereo. Soon they were face to face, with Alvin making the first move. “You’re up kinda early today; does your mom know that you’re here?”

A tidbit of valuable information was exchanged. The adolescent shrugged his shoulders, and in a timid voice said, “She’s gone for the weekend.”

That explained *everything* about the boy with a guilt-ridden face. The adult rolled his eyes and mildly shook his head. Maintaining his upbeat tempo, Alvin changed to a more important subject. Leaning forward, he began to whisper as if he were telling a secret. “*Can I let you in on something?*” he asked in a friendly tone.

The question piqued William’s curiosity, compelling him to lean closer. “*What?*” he whispered back.

Alvin then repositioned his body and pointed toward the center of town. “Do you see that old, old wooden building down there with the big cross in front of it?” he asked.

William looked at the church below and said, “Yeah, I see it.”

Turning to the boy who needed guidance, he got a bit closer and whispered, “It’s a neat place to hang out—and *they accept guys like us . . .*”

Alvin’s message was delivered with perfection, causing the young man to think. After a short pause and a dry swallow, William responded, “Yeah, I guess it’s a good place . . .”

The good judge was fast on his feet and found a common ground that would fit at that moment. “Would you like to join me for breakfast this morning?”

His approach was *perfect*. The good man knew when a good kid was reaching out to be accepted. He also knew how to tactfully nudge someone in the *right direction*. The youth extended his hand with an ear-to-ear smile, realizing that his day was off to a good start. “That would be great!” he countered.

They were now on the same page. “This will be fun!” said Alvin as he pushed William on the shoulder. “I’ll meet you at Ric Bratton’s place. He has a breakfast spread that all the truckers are talking about; and don’t worry—this one’s on me!” In the same motion, Alvin threw in a condition to address the morning’s problem. “That is, if you can come along peacefully . . .”

William knew exactly what he was talking about and immediately apologized for the mayhem he created. "Sorry about that," he said with a slight laugh.

Alvin pushed the issue a smidgen further. "You will probably see the road better if you took off those glasses . . ."

The young man realized that *looking cool* at that time of day wouldn't work well with a county judge. Besides, he greatly respected the man. He placed the glasses in his shirt pocket and removed his hat.

The shiny new truck followed Alvin to the well-known spot in town. Parked side by side, they walked to the front doors, where Ric's country humor took over. Waving both hands over his head, the shop owner stepped outside, pleading, "Don't shoot!"

All present laughed, knowing of the teenager's escapade that morning. William loved the attention he was receiving and joined in on the laughter. "Sorry about that," he said to Ric.

"I can't hear you," replied Ric with a theatrical twist. "My ears are plugged!" More laughter followed, with knees being slapped.

Alvin playfully grabbed William by the hair, as if he was punishing him. "*What are we gonna do with you?*" he said, using a ring of laughter.

At that moment, Ric took over and introduced his friend *William* to all who were present.

It was music to William Stokes' ears!

From there, he and Alvin ate breakfast with a couple of local truckers. Ric would join in when time allowed. More introductions were made as hungry drivers entered the famed general store, with amusing stories circulating.

It was possibly the greatest morning in the life of William Randall Stokes IV. Unlike the cruel comments that surrounded him throughout his school life, this day would be different. Here, he was NOT *Mouse*; he was William! More important, he was being spoken to and treated *the way friends do to one another*.

Matt Shea

He did, however, make *one* tactical error. The young man got ahead of himself by formulating an early conclusion:

He was convinced that his bionic stereo did indeed update his image to the entire valley.

How right he was . . .