

## Hungry Ants

Barry Adamson

"I'll tell ya something, Scagnetti, in all of my days in the penal business, and that ain't no small amount of days, right boys?" "Oh, no." "Nope." "Mickey and Mallory Knox are without a doubt the most twisted, depraved pair of shit fucked that has ever been my displeasure to lay my goddamn eyes on. I'm tellin' you, these two motherfuckers are a walkin' reminder of just how fucked up the system really is." "Don't get me started, okay, warden? Don't get me started." "Dwight, you call me Dwight."

"They've killed a shitload of inmates and guards." "Three inmates, five guards and one shrink all in one year's time... Open that goddamn gate!" "Yes, sir." "What, a psychiatrist?" "Yeah, Mickey's better half, Miss Mallory, strangled his ass when he made the dumb-ass mistake to ask her what her parents were like, and she done it all shut up on tranquilizers too." "Oh..."

"Ain't love grand? If that doesn't tell the truth. Listen, I got another dead lie: love makes the world go around." "Hey, I need to talk to you 'bout..." "How did a fellow like you get to be a specialist in psychos anyway?" "Well, actually, Dwight, I'd recommend having your mother killed by one. After that happened I developed a rather keen interest in the subject, you know?"

"What happened?" "When I was born I spend the first part of my life in Texas." "Oh, that's funny, you don't have an accent." "Nah, I don't wanna talk like those assholes." "Well, my, my mother was from Texas." "I meant those other assholes, you know, who used to beat the shit out of me. Anyway, one day, when I was 8 years old, my mother... my mother... I wanted to play in the park. And it just so happened to be the same day Charles Whitman had climbed to the top of the University Texas Tower and started shooting strangers." "And you was with her." "Sure was. You see, the thing is, Dwight, I didn't hear any shots. I didn't hear any of 'em. And one minute I'm walking with my mother when all of a sudden... Chest explodes. She hits the ground, right? I'm just lookin' at her, her forearm flies off, her hip explodes and... Now, I'm not hearing any of these shots, right? BOOM! Chest explodes! Right?"

"I spent all goddamn day lying flat on the grass, bein' eat alive by fucking ants. I'm thinking, what happened to my ma, you know? And ever since then I've had a strong opinion about the psychopathic fools that's alive today in America's fast-food culture. I tend not to exhibit the self-discipline, you know." "You..." "And comin' off a peace officer." "You got it right, Jack. You got it right. Say, you don't mind, do ya, if I call you Jack?"