

Scott phones me during his latest crisis asking me to meet him in the park across the road from our office building. The crazy thing is that Scott was in his office no more than thirty feet away from me tucked under his desk when he made the call, so he obviously felt the need for secrecy. Maybe he's been watching those DVD's of Twenty Four again. After a quick bathroom stop, as I was directed to do by Scott so it wouldn't look too obvious with both of us leaving the office at the same time, I met him at the park.

"What's up?" I ask while following him to a nearby picnic table.

"We have a mole," he replies without looking directly at me.

"What? Like a mole-rat or marsupial mole? Can't we get an exterminator?"

"No, no, no. A person! A spy!!! It's all right here." Scott shoots me an exasperated look while firmly clutching a sheet of blue paper. Then he proceeds to describe and act out his incredibly complex one step plan with Star Wars action figures. While it was an enjoyable show I've heard better Darth Vader impressions.

Back at my desk I'm trying to wrap my mind around Scott's story and wonder if there is more to it than what he told me. I've only been working with Scott for a few weeks, so what did I know except the fact employees in our office primarily perform data entry for our candy distribution warehouse. I'm having a hard time understanding what secrets might be in jeopardy. Scott's theatrics didn't help either. Since my job currently involves the exciting tasks of collecting and reporting on data this is a welcome diversion for me. So, I'm in search of the mole.

We only have a handful of people who work in the office, so it shouldn't be too difficult to figure out what's really going on. My first target is Arnold who sits across from me. Doing anything with Arnold isn't very desirable by any stretch of the imagination particularly because

he always has some indefinable aroma about him and the hair protruding from his ears is almost at the end of its journey in a quest to meet up with the hair from his nose. I can't help but wonder if the only reason for his continued employment is that his uncle is friends with Scott especially considering when he isn't moving the facial follicles away from his line of sight he spends an inordinate amount of time at the water cooler and in the bathroom. I think the maintenance guy even gave Arnold his own stall. After watching and smelling him for a few days I found no reason to suspect him as the mole. Not to mention that I could no longer handle looking at the nest of hair being constructed on the side of his face and wondered when some small woodland creatures might take up residence there.

I keep thinking back to my conversation with Scott and still can't believe he thinks someone in our company is selling our secrets. He wouldn't tell me what those secrets were, so I'm left to wonder. It doesn't make sense. It's not as though we're a company like Coke and everyone wants to know our secret ingredients. The only secret ingredient we have is being able to find a few able bodied folks with a shred of common sense who are willing to sit in a chair eight hours a day typing numbers and letters on a keyboard. I'll have to keep digging.

Next on my list is Melanie. She's a very sweet woman in her fifties with shoulder length dark brown hair, blue eyes, and a pear shaped figure who has a fondness for polyester. I firmly believe if she could somehow convince manufacturers to make even more things out of polyester she would do so in a heartbeat. As I sharpened my focus on Melanie I'm quickly reminded of why she's still single; aside from the polyester obsession. Every word, phrase, or sentence she speaks always ends with the phrase "ya know" after it. At first it's kind of comical, but after a ten minute conversation all you want to do is throttle her with one of her toy troll dolls that she keeps on the shelf next to her computer. Needless to say, after two days of watching Melanie

I'm convinced that if she's telling secrets to anyone it would only be to the troll dolls in her cube, ya know.

I'm halfway through investigating our staff and have told Scott that so far I've found nothing even remotely close to suspect we have a mole in our midst. In his frantic voice he insists I press on to complete my search. He's been watching the BBC again.

Next I move on to Glen. All my instincts told me that he could very possibly be the one. He's a short, stocky, bald, retired security officer who obtained a special law enforcement certificate from the local community college. Of course, the two hour course he took, as described to me, consisted of him sitting in a room with twenty other people of similar age and background watching an old *CHIPS* video for their training. I'm not sure if Glen could handle himself the same way Jon and Ponch did. My understanding is that during his first week on the job guarding an electronics store he was spooked by a large rat about the size of small child. At least that's what he said and he never went back. He's always broke and gets into arguments with Scott from time to time as well. His work day is spent typing on the keyboard, muttering to himself and then yelling at his computer when it does erratic things like display the screen saver. It didn't take long to discover that Glen not only had no interest in any company secrets, but he was too busy on the internet searching for bald cures. After another dead end I moved on to my final suspect.

Cindy is a very sweet girl in her mid twenties just a shade over five feet. With short black hair, green eyes, pierced earrings, and a fair complexion she has the face of a twelve year old. Cindy came to work for our company right out of college because after a month of searching she couldn't find the job she wanted after studying Gaelic Cultures in school for four years. Imagine that? And I would have thought the market for Gaelic historians would be wide

open with all sorts of career potential. The mindless data entry appears to give Cindy a chance to relax and think about what she really wants to do for the rest of her life. I'm wondering if Cindy may be the mole when I learn she is constantly making *private* calls on her cell phone from the bathroom. The only thing is that the office walls are paper thin and a large vent assists in carrying the sound waves necessary for anyone with decent hearing to understand all her conversations quite clearly. At the beginning I thought I might be on to something, but then after her tenth call to the vet about how her cat, Ms. Marcy, is having hairball issues and leaves little brown packages on her bed I surmised Cindy is definitely not the mole and perhaps she shouldn't have a cat.

My surveillance has concluded and I've had no luck finding the mole. With my co-workers out to lunch all I want to do is relax. The feeling passes when I see a blue sheet of paper on Scott's desk. It's the same one he was holding when he told me he had proof of the mole. Moments later I'm staring at the blue sheet dumfounded when Scott shows up.

"Did you need something?" asks Scott.

"This is blank! This was your evidence of a mole?"

"Well...I wasn't sure...it...uh...was a guess."

"A guess?"

"I saw this television show---"

"TV Show? What are you talking about?"

"Tell you what. Forget the mole. Watch for employees who pick their nose too often,"

Scott says clandestinely.

"Pick their nose? I don't think so."

"How about employees who go to the bathroom a lot?"

“No thanks,” I say shaking my head and walking back to my desk.

“Wait! I have other ideas,” yells Scott from his office.

Frustrated I pack my things and for the heck of it I tell Scott I’ve been recruited by a competitor and they offered me a twenty percent pay increase. He says nothing, but as I’m walking out the door he blurts out he’ll offer me a thirty percent increase to stay.

I have no idea why I accepted, but I don’t care because now I have extra cash to spend and I’m looking for employees who use too many vowels.