

Johnny Briz

Mystic Mice

Episode 1-1

In the suburbs of Las Vegas, there is a house large enough to be considered a mansion, though humble enough to be missed in the map of famous places. According to the phone book and the post office, this mansion belongs to Copper Mystran, a former magician slash hypnotist turned recluse. It is better known as the home of Copper's adopted and more visible son, Adam Packbell. Adam's a local card game player with a sharp wit and likable personality, though he could be quiet and introspective at times. And unlike his father, Adam doesn't hide behind a mask of secrecy both figuratively and literally, but tries his best at being a normal kid, considering the environment he's in.

An environment that was far from normal, considering who was on the house's roof greeting the sunrise: A gray field mouse two feet five, with off-colored ears and a mane of brown hair. He had on a white T-shirt on which his ruby crystal pendant now rests on, black slacks with white buttons wore uncuffed above his white shoes with black spats, and familiar white gloves on his hands. It was this toon-like image which gave this mouse, Johnny Briz by name, a charm once kept for a corporate sponsored rodent cartoon character, instead of this live animal who found himself in the human world just a few days ago.



Johnny's ears perk up, picking up the sound of Adam's voice. The mouse's eyes opened, showing their very rare—for a mouse anyway—mysterious green pools. He gets up to vault over the edge of the roof and down to the patio to find Adam talking on the phone.

As a mouse, Johnny's movements are just as quiet as he was when he was two and a half *inches* tall standing on his hind legs, something he'd claim he always stood and walked on. Johnny's human-like appearance and traits is a result, or so the records say, of a science experiment performed by his ancestors several decades ago, and those lab mice's descendants experienced an accelerated rate of evolution to his own generation. (There was a movie inspired by such an experiment, from which Johnny got his name.) He's still a mouse, however, and he wasn't detected by Adam until Adam heard a mutter from Johnny's concentration. Johnny was trying to pick up the voice coming from that tiny box called a cel phone.

“Just a few weeks ago,” Johnny said in his current broken English, “I would use it as couch.”

“One moment, please,” Adam said, then pushed a button that muted the phone for a second or two. “Morning, Johnny. In case you’re wondering, I have Uncle Roy on the phone.”

“chuuuuu?” Johnny said, tilting his head in an inquisitive manner.

Uncle Roy. That's what Johnny and Adam calls Roy Disney, the one discovered Johnny and his mate Susan Traveller the same evening of the still-not-fully-known incident that turned them both to their current size. It was Roy who first gave Johnny the moniker of “The People's Mickey Mouse,” mostly because of his voice—very similar to the mentioned cartoon character—a perchance of prankery and cheerfulness, and choice of outfit which Roy and some quick thinking Disney fans made up for who they taken in as “their mousie.” It was from Roy where Johnny heard of a place called 'The Walt Disney Company,' where



Mickey Mouse hails from, and about the incompetent people ruling over it which made Roy left that place in disgust.

“Why yes, I have it here.” Adam said into the cel phone, while pulling out a slip of paper from his pant pocket. “Apparently, Michael Eisner wanted to quietly sweep what happened under the rug.”

It took Johnny a few seconds to realize who that name was. When he remembered that Michael Eisner was the name of an very embattled person who is called a 'Chairman' of an place called 'The Walt Disney Company,' the same place where a group of lawyers who attacked him a few days ago claimed to be from. In short, Michael was the leader of this 'Management' that was so incompetent that made Roy leave.

The next “chuuuuuuu!” Johnny made came out sounding like a grunt.

“You and me both, Jonathan.” Adam told Johnny, using the long version of his name. “I'd rather have him fall prostrate in front of you and make him kiss your feet.”

Adam's latest wisecrack—a twisted sense of humor Johnny likes—made Johnny laugh out loud. A laugh nearly identical to Mickey Mouse's “Huh-Ha!”

“This letter came from Mikey Boy,” Adam said while handing Johnny the slip of paper. 'Mikey Boy' was the pet name used in jest when referring to Michael Eisner, a grating name people call him as to his face. “It seems to be a corporate version of a 'Get out of Jail Free' card.”

Johnny opened the letterhead, and immediately recognized the image of Mickey Mouse identifying that the letter did indeed come from The Walt Disney Company. He recognized Michael's name on the letter, and most of the words on this letter, though there are some parts which went over his head:

I wanted to tell you this over the phone or in person, but as you know, running a corporation takes up all your time, as well as in some places the debate I have with Roy E Disney can get into ultra-

combustible levels. It is with great regret that you three [Adam, Johnny, and Susan] have gotten in a middle of this debate over how The Walt Disney Company is to be run, and I hope you understand that, like Roy, I harbor no ill will toward the three of you.

I also want to apologize to the three of you for all the actions--and future actions I'm certain--of some of the members of this corporation's legal department. Judging from what I saw from the television, the appearance of your mice characters doesn't constitute copyright infringement, or at least, fall under "Fair Use" laws, and paying homage to our founder's famous character. Either way, I do not consider Johnny Briz or Susan Traveller to be worth the legal department's time. This decision was settled further when I learned that the two mice were actually *real live animals* and not animated characters like I initially thought of. Therefore, this letter is an official proclamation by The Walt Disney Company to remind all and every future legal agent that you and your rodent's existence and activity are NOT in any way infringing on any copyrighted material by this corporation.

Consider this letter a restraining order against this company's legal department. You are advised to keep this letter with you at all times. When you encounter any more action from an overzealous lawyer, present them this letter to show that they should refrain from any further action. If this doesn't work, feel free to call the authorities, at that time should be made aware of this letter.

As a token of compensation for this inconvenience as well as toward future goodwill, I have included an investment account in your name with 150 shares of The Walt Disney Company stock, as well as an extra share framed for you to put on your wall. It is my hopes that we can have a better relationship after this chapter is past.

“I have the main copy in my safe deposit box,” Adam continued over the phone, “faxed a copy to the local cops, and a second here in my wallet, so I can easily flick it out when I need be. If it doesn't work, well, you've seen what I can do.”

By now, Johnny's ears finally got accustomed to what that cel phone was saying, and was able to pick up Roy Disney's

voice: “Yeah, I know. I've seen what you could do with a Paintball gun. There may be a show you might want to be in, and I'll tell you about it later, but back to Mikey Boy. It's nice to know that he still has *some* sense of right and wrong. Unfortunately, his perchance for micro-management and emphasis of his own corporate image keeps that sense hidden. It would be a good idea keep that paper with you and Johnny at all times.”

At that, Johnny folded the paper at it's respective pre-made creases and stuffed it into his back pants pocket.

“I hate to cut this conversation short, guys, but I have a shareholder's meeting over at Philly. I'll be sure to send you some free stuff from there, especially a report of the bloodletting Mikey gets thanks to the vote. Take care you two.”

As Adam slips the cel phone into the pocket, Johnny said to him, “There's something I don't get, Adam-chu.”

“And that is?”

“This whole...” Johnny tried to say it. “...copie right in fridge ment...thing. How can people not like me be like this Mickey Mouse?”

Adam knelt down next to Johnny and shook the mouse's brown hair. “You want me to explain what makes corporate types to



you, Mousie? Jonathan, you don't want me to do that dirty job.”

“Huh-Ha!”

The cell phone rang again, an electronic BRAAAAI-I-I-I-I-I-I-I-IP that didn't sound natural to either one of them, but nevertheless, Adam picked the phone up. When he saw the number on a display, he found out that it was his father calling from Taiwan. “Hello, Papa!”

“Adam, good morning for you, if my calculations are correct.” a new voice came from the small box, a male voice that sounded younger and more forceful in Johnny's ears. This is the first time the mouse has ever heard Copper Mystran's voice, and it filled him with curiosity about actually meeting him sometime. “It seems that you've been quite busy while I'm away. So tell me, this Johnny Briz and Susan Traveller, they're actually real live mice and not some animation thing that Roy Disney whipped up.”

“They're real mice, Dad. I take it you heard all about what happened last weekend.”

“Difficult *not* to. It was on all the news shows world wide. Someone was even making a Johnny Briz toy or two here. I'll have one for you when I return, but I have to ask you, are you going to be all right? I've never seen lawyers so formidable, or directly confrontational, before.”

“I'd wouldn't worry about me, Papa. I've just got a letter from Michael Eisner saying that I've got immunity now.”

“Mikey Boy shows some actual sanity. That's good to hear.”

“And you know that I'll be able to take care of myself even against Disney Lawyers. Strip them of their corporate ordainment and show that you're not going to bend over to them, and they end up running scared. Typical Bullies, without people being scared of them, they end up total cowards.”

“I hope you're right. I'll see to get you some extra help in this matter, hopefully before the next attack. Now since I've got my own hassles over in Bangkok, nothing I can't handle, but I might be a bit late in coming home, so don't go and act dog-eyed waiting for me. I'll tell you more about it later. Love you, son.”

“Me too, Papa, take care.”

Adam turned off the cel phone and looked at Johnny, who merely shook his head with a “chuuuuuu.”

“You hungry, Johnny? I'd figure you want something to eat.”

“What's on the menu?” Johnny said, his ears and nose perking up at the mention of food.

“I've got some grub whipped up in the kitchen. Come with me.”