

# THE STRANGE SWOOGLEHORN

A story about the dangers of substance abuse.

Fragrance floated through the air, it was a wonderful time of year, the Bog was awash in blossoms, dissolving winters drear. Spring had settled on the Bog, dusting every plant that grew, with flowers of every shape and size, in every dazzling hue. Critters came from far and near to take in this wondrous sight, they would stroll beneath the fragrant blooms in a state of sheer delight.

The breeze would gently sift the Bog, releasing perfumed petals, which drift quietly like snowflakes then very gently settles on God's creation big and small, clothing everything around in downy floral blankets that mound upon the ground.

High above the canopy the Swooglehorn did vine, its frilly purple trumpet holding nectar quite divine. Birds and squirrels feasted on this tasty treat so rare, at the dainty floral bistro so high up in the air. Critters living on the ground never knew just how it tasted, as birds and squirrels drank it all making sure that none was wasted.

But... This warm springtime would see a change in the Bog and all its critters, you see... the Sleazles had moved into town causing dark and scary jitters.

The Sleazles didn't have good jobs; they just hung around town smirking, they flashed a lot of cash though on corners where they'd be lurking.

Mama's rushed their babies past the places Sleazles stayed, sensing danger lurking close at hand, they were nervous and afraid.

There was a most peculiar scent rising from a Sleazle shack, with sickly looking critters who would slip around the back. Word round the Bog was Sleazles brewed a potent, powerful mix from the nectar of the Swooglehorn they'd learned illegally to fix.

Parents all had cautioned their little ones about, the dangers of this potent mix and the troubles it would sprout.

*"Oh stay away!" they warned them, "from this crafty sweet elixir, it will fool you into thinking that it's the very finest fixer, of all that is a problem and a worry in your life, but it lies and then it grabs you, then what's left is pain and strife.*

*You'll wrestle and you'll struggle trying to break yourself away, from the power of this elixir that only God can take away."*

The parents hoped they'd done enough to warn their children well, the rest would be the children's choice and only time would tell. Well... Wondering by came little Lumpy, a lemming lost as he could be, he was hungry and afraid and looking for some company.

Walking past the Sleazles' shack, he noticed critters going in, misery painted on each face, lost in a world of sin, but... when they came back out again they acted just like they were floating, the elixir messing up their minds, now they were laughing and were boasting.

So... Lumpy slipped through the Sleazles gate and waddled down the trail, to see what this was all about and why the critters looked so pale.

Slimey Sleazle, head nincompoop was sitting round the back, taking money from all those staggering out of the rundown, filthy shack.

*"Come here sonny and take a taste of this Swooglehorn elixir, you can have the first one free of charge, you won't find a better fixer.*

*You'll forget about your problems, you won't care about a thing...just come right here and take a taste and have yourself a fling!"*

Well... Lemmings have a problem; they usually choose to go along, not making good sound choices, that would keep them safe and strong.

So... Lumpy took the cup from Slimey and sipped the sweetened potion, it warmed his tummy going down, then gave him the absurd notion that all was well, his problems gone; he no longer had to worry, as he sat there sipping on the drink his vision getting blurry.

His legs felt heavy, his head felt light, he felt floaty and all dizzy, his mouth dried up, his nose ran down and his heart was in a tizzy. But, he didn't mind as the elixir had taken all his cares away, he no longer worried he was hungry and without a place to stay.

Well...In just a few short wretched weeks, Lumpy's meager funds ran out, making Slimey very angry, causing him to yell and shout...***"You get no more elixir till I get cold, hard cash! You don't mean a thing to me, I'll just dump you in the trash!"***

Lumpy's life, a total mess, was revealed at sunlight's dawning, he awoke atop that pile of trash, all smelly, sick and yawning.

*"Oh...I've got to get some money quick to buy some more elixir, without it I'm too sick and weak, I've gotta have more fixer!"*

He started begging on Bog corners and stealing food to eat, the old brown box he lived in fell apart from rain and sleet.

He and misery were now best friend, he lost all he had and more, his friends and family all long gone and his body sick and sore.

One day while limping through the Bog, he heard a choir singing, it was coming from the small Bog church, its bell now gently ringing.

*'Oh...how good that sounds,'* thought Lumpy, as he crept up closer still, letting the pure sounds bathe his soul with God's healing, loving will.

He peeked inside a window and saw Hartlie as he prayed *'Ohh... I wish I'd been like Hartlie,'* he thought, *'he never would have strayed.'*

As Hartlie rose up to his feet, he noticed Lumpy looking in, his wee frail hands now resting beneath his sagging chin.

Horrified how ill he looked, Hartlie rushed to help the lemming, full of love and deep compassion, never scornful or condemning.

He wrapped his arms round lumpy and they spoke of Lumpy's sin, of the sorry choices Lumpy made and of the mess his life was in.

*"I don't know why I made the choice to take that old elixir...Slimey lied...said it was lots of fun and the very finest fixer, but all it did was make me lose everything I love, my family, friends and all I own and even God above."*

*"Lumpy... If you truly want to leave behind this dangerous life of sin, then God can set you free from it and your new life can begin. But... you must keep a clear, sound mind, never getting high again, losing self-control is perilous and leads only to great pain. In first Thessalonians chapter five, in verses six and seven, the Bible warns to keep a clear mind if we want to get to heaven. Put God first in all your life and He'll free you from the power of this dangerous elixir made from that Swooglehorn flower.*

*We'll get you help then see to it that Slimey goes to jail and with all the harm and hurt he's caused, I don't think he'll make his bail. Besides... He needs to spend sometime in there and consider what he's done in making money from the elixir and the lives it's overcome!"*

Then Hartlie took the lemming home to nurse him back to health...as Deputy Eagle marched to the shack to see about Slimey's wealth. **"You've made money from all this misery,"** growled an angry Deputy Eagle, **"now you'll cool your heels in jail my friend! POP! GOES SLIMEY SLEAZLE!!!!"**

The end...  
could it be...? **THE BEGINNING!**

(This story to be continued in... "Weezie Sleazle")

# THE BEGINNING

Scriptures from the Holy Bible to help us understand life's trials.

**Proverbs 28:13** People that conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.

**1 Corinthians 10:13** God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so you can endure.

**Psalms 119:11** I have hidden your word (the Bible) in my heart, that I may not sin against you.

**James 4:7** So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

**1 John 4:4** But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the (Holy) Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world.

**1 John 1:9** But if we confess our sins to Him (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

**John 3:16** For God loved the world so much, that He gave His one and only Son so that everyone who believes in Him will have eternal life.

This series was written in an effort to help children understand that nothing can overcome us if we are walking close to Jesus, trusting in His love and obeying His commandments.