

The Tale of Mary and Her Terrible Illness

Chapter 1: calling in sick

Mary was going to go to work on Monday but she came down with a terrible cold on Sunday. It was awful, really bad, made her throat swell up; in fact even swallowing was really painful. She got upset about it and decided to call in sick on Monday.

The boss answered, and she didn't need to say much for him to realise how ill she was. She sounded terrible, her voice was all garbled and he could barely make her out. So he said *don't worry, take the day off work and see if you're well enough to come back in on Tuesday.*

But on Tuesday she felt even worse. She thought, *maybe there's something wrong with me, I mean really wrong with me*, as she hadn't felt this bad in ages. She talked to her husband Ted, and he said *well why not go and see a doctor and he might have some good advice for you.* So Mary said *okay, I will go and see the doctor this afternoon.*

She felt so awful that her husband had to drive her to the doctor's surgery as she couldn't even walk. When she got out of the car she nearly fell over and her husband had to help her up. He helped her into the surgery and into a seat. She was crying by then because she felt so bad. Finally the doctor said *okay you can come in now*, and he saw to her.

He checked her throat but it all looked fine to him. Maybe a bit swollen, but otherwise okay. So he prescribed Mary some cough medicine and told her to get plenty of rest. It looked like she wasn't going to go work on Tuesday after all. She would have to see what she felt like on Wednesday.

When she got home that afternoon she just wanted to watch 'The Lion King' on DVD and curl up in bed. It had been her birthday recently and Ted had bought the DVD for her. So she took her cough medicine, and Ted said to her *do you want anything else to make you comfortable?* She said *not really, I think I will be fine now if I just take my medicine and get into bed.*

'The Lion King' was really good and Mary fell asleep feeling happy. The next morning she still felt really bad though and so she called in sick again. Her boss was quite understanding about it; he even said that Mary could have the whole week off if she wanted. But Mary said *I will try and see if I can come in on Wednesday.*

Chapter two: Mary makes a decision

Wednesday came round in a flash and Mary did feel a little better. She had been taking her cough medicine for a few days. She put on her best work suit and did her makeup, and went into work feeling brand new. Her boss said to her that she looked much better, and he hoped she stayed better because there was a big project coming up that he needed her help on.

Mary said *well what is this big project?* Her boss said *it is going to involve some long hours and you might need to work over the weekend on this one.* Mary frowned. She didn't really like working on weekends. Also, lately she had been thinking that she didn't much like her job at all. She decided it was time for a real change. She thought, *maybe I should become a librarian or a hairdresser or just anything that doesn't involve me sitting at a desk 9-5 and occasionally having to work weekends.* She

thought, *it isn't fair for me to have to work weekends when my friends all get to have time off to look after their kids.*