

## Nobody is Watching You!

Pam walked to her minivan with a little spring in her step. Her meeting had gone well and even ended earlier than expected. She had time to run by the grocery store on her way home before it closed for the night.

Arriving at her destination, Pam jumped out and grabbed a shopping cart. She entered the store softly humming to herself. She turned the cart into the snack aisle, where a woman was standing about halfway down. Pam nodded and smiled at her as she walked past. She grabbed a box off the shelf and placed it in her cart.

“Pam, are those powdered donuts on your program?”

Pam whirled around. The woman she just passed was looking at her with a conspiratorial smile and a wink.

*Do I know her? Pam thought fast. I don't recognize her at all! How does she know about me?*

“No, they're not!” Pam laughed, with a little shakiness in her voice. “I just forgot.” Another nervous giggle and Pam returned the box to the shelf. She pushed her cart away and hurried to the frozen food aisle.

A man holding a basket was examining the TV dinners. She opened the door next to him and pulled out a half-gallon of ice cream.

“Is ice cream part of your diet plan, Pam?” The man snickered. “I may have to try that one!”

“Oh, it's not for me,” Pam stuttered, reacting from surprise. A second person, whom she had no clue to as who he was, had called her by name and made references to her diet. “I'm just getting it for a...” Realizing that it sounded fake even to her, she replaced the ice cream carton and pressed on.

She took refuge in the produce section, where a quick glance around the area showed only two women, neither one she recognized.

Like that makes a difference tonight, she thought with sarcasm.

Pam bagged some lettuce, tomatoes, onions and celery. Feeling a little better, she prepared to leave.

“Good for you, Pam!” One of the women said to her, smiling. “It's good to see you sticking to your program.”

“Thanks,” Pam gave her a nervous grin. Who the hell are you?

“Look what it did for me!” The woman held her arms up and pirouetted, displaying her figure.

“Um...you look...great,” Pam forced, trying not to show she had no clue who in the world the woman was.

The woman waved a toodle-doo and walked on.

*OK, I've obviously entered the Twilight Zone, Pam thought keeping down the rising hysteria in her. I remember the episode where the woman Marcia is in the department store and everybody knows her name. And it turned out, she was really a mannequin!*

Walking as fast as she dared so to not look like she was running, Pam hurried back to the snack aisle. It was empty of customers. She pushed her cart quickly down the aisle, grabbed a package of Oreos and hid it under the vegetables without slowing down.

She emerged at the other end and almost ran her cart into another pushed by an elderly man.

“Are you all right, Pam?” the man asked with genuine concern. “You’re all flushed and red-faced.”

Without responding, Pam shoved past him and ran to the checkout counter.

*Now I'm positive I've entered another dimension. I gotta get out of here.*

Pam arrived at the checkout counter and placed her items on the belt.

“Did you find everything all right, Pam?” The cashier asked with enthusiasm.

*Just smile and act normal, Pam said to herself. Her pulse was racing, but she managed to answer without her voice shaking.*

“How many points are these on your program, Pam?” The cashier smirked holding up the Oreos.

Pam said nothing but kept grinning like an idiot. *Help*, she thought in desperation.

With the transaction completed, Pam sprinted across the parking lot as fast as she could. She pressed a button on her remote control key chain and the back door opened automatically. She threw the bags in, not worrying about breaking the cookies, and slammed the door shut.

Pam ran to the driver’s side hitting the unlock button on her key chain. As she reached for the handle she caught her reflection in the window. Her arms dropped to her side in

frustration, no longer frightened. She removed a large white adhesive label from the front of her blouse, remembering that it said in huge, bright letters: “Welcome to Weight Watchers! My name is Pam!”