

THE PROTECTORS OF THE WOOD ADVENTURE SERIES

[Based on the Protectors of the Wood Book Series](#)

[Written by John KixMiller](#)

[© 2025 All Rights Reserved](#)

[@protectorsofthewood](#)

Join our story of misfit teenagers as they struggle to save the world from climate change.

Book #4: Abby and Wendy

Episode #215: I'm Missing Something Here

Narrator: Back at the churchyard gate Abby found Officer Harley chatting with a woman. She must have been in her fifties, with white hair, loose skin under her chin, and a formal wool skirt and jacket that seemed meant for a cooler day and a previous decade. No one else was even nearby. Abby was thinking:

Abby: Sulay, Nico, and Phoebe are having lunch with Zoe... but what happened to everyone else?

Narrator: Abby decided to wait at the gate and join the conversation.

Abby: I'm glad to see a quiet day.

Officer Harley: At last. May we have many more!

Narrator: Abby was about to walk through the gate when Officer Harley said:

Officer Harley: Abby, I'd like to introduce you to Mary Robinson. We go way back.

Narrator: Abby turned and shook her outstretched hand.

Harley: She's a real old school reporter. Nothing at all like that pack of wolves we've seen the last few days.

Mary Robinson: Now, now, I'm sure they're not that bad. Some of those people are my friends. But I admit that I've been hoping to avoid the crowd.

Narrator: Mary Robinson turned to Abby.

Mary Robinson: One of my friends told me you were taking business cards the last couple of days, and I don't want to miss out. I write about politics for the Fellsburg Star. I know we're not from the valley, but Fellsburg is still the state capital.

Abby: I'm happy to take your card, and maybe get in touch with you someday, but why are you interested?

Mary Robinson: I cover the governor and the wheeling and dealing in state government, and I like to understand things. I like to know what I'm talking about, but I've been making no progress on the Rivergate issue. Why is the governor trying to empty a perfectly decent small town? I accepted an invitation to visit last Monday. I'd read the Sonny Walker interview in the Evansville Record, and a red light went on in my mind. I'm missing something here. So, I went and talked to Sonny Walker myself. I saw that he was telling the truth about Rivergate. They actually have adjusted to losing the bridge. There's no emergency that I can see. But Sonny pretends to have no idea about the governor's motivations. He actually claimed that the governor is just ill informed! I'm not taken in by that nonsense, and I'm sure Sonny isn't either. I'm supposed to come up with an article on this subject, but no one will tell me the truth.

Abby: Why would you think I know anything about it? All I've learned is not to talk too much.

Mary Robinson: Let me thank you for your patience. I know people bother you day after day, sometimes in truly frightening ways. But I must tell you, young lady, I do my homework. I know you know things that I need to know. I respect you, indeed I do. So, I assume you're doing your best, doing the right thing in awful circumstances. So let me give you my card. If you ever want to talk to me, I'll drive here in a couple of hours. I still get around. And please hear me when I say that I know things that you need to know.

Narrator: The woman raised her index finger as she looked at Abby with fierce blue eyes for emphasis.

Mary Robinson: I would tell you these things straight out because I like you, but I have a job to do. So, I'll trade.

Narrator: Abby was still unwilling to promise anything.

Abby: I appreciate your offer. I'll think about it.

Mary Robinson: Of course. You'll have to do your homework to have any trust in me. And you'll also have to realize that you truly need information. I have that information.

Narrator: Abby didn't know what to say. She was thinking:

Abby: I might have that information already, but I'm not sure. Can I risk talking to her? Can I risk not talking to her?

Mary Robinson: Thank you for listening, dear. Don't lose that card. One of these days you'll need it. Bye now. Thanks for your time.

Narrator: And Mary walked slowly to a nearby old jeep. Abby was bewildered, and said to Harley:

Abby: I can't believe she has a car like that!

Harley: She likes to get around in the snow or rain. She was here in the church when the hailstorm hit. You have to take Mary Robinson seriously. She's helped get people elected and helped put people in jail. We go way back.

Abby: I just want to thank you for all your help!

Narrator: Abby realized that she had underestimated Officer Harley.

Abby: And please, this world looks very big and confusing to me. If you ever see that I'm making a mistake, let me know.

Harley: I'll do that. You're a nice kid with a lot on your shoulders. You've had no reason to visit our station, but I'm sure you know we're just down Main Street near Grove Avenue, next to the bank. The Chief is always complaining that nobody ever tells him anything. Please stop by. You'll be doing yourself a favor.

Narrator: Abby thanked him and walked her bike across the lawn to the cottage.

But she couldn't sit still. There were too many things to think about, so she got out the hoe and started in on the weeds. It was a job she didn't like to do, because she had a weak spot for the weeds. In her opinion the weeds were perfectly good plants that nobody appreciates, because they don't understand them. This actually was Wendy's firmly held view of the whole situation. The difference between Abby and her godmother was that Wendy actually knew the virtues of hundreds of wild plants, and Abby only knew the virtues of a few.

Abby: But the problem is... people in this town expect an orderly churchyard, and will take it out on Tuck and me if this place looks shabby to them. And I need something to do, or I'll worry myself into a panic. I wish I dared to visit the Mapstick. I feel like Mary Robinson. I'm missing something here.

Narrator: So, Abby started in on the pigweed, the galinsoga, and the mugwort growing between the rows of marigolds and snapdragons near the front fence. This was exactly the area that an alert pedestrian would notice.

Abby: Wendy told me galinsoga is called quickweed because it will go to seed five times between May and September. It's true, but I still like the plant. So vulnerable with those tiny white flowers, so easy to uproot, but you turn around and there they are, back again. Everything dies and is reborn. Kayla isn't ready to think about that. I take it for granted. I assume it's obvious, but of course it isn't. So... I put my foot in it, put the weight of this strange universe on that poor girl's shoulders.

Narrator: Abby moved on to the vegetable garden and picked the last of the ripe vegetables. Abby knew perfectly well that she was starving. No breakfast, no lunch. She was losing weight in this stressful time. But she refused to go to Scutter's, or up to Fred Peterson's roadside market, or even to Sammy's Coffee Shop.

Abby: I'm getting paranoid. I've got to get out of town. It's already 3:30, and I meet Lluvia by 5! I'll simmer another vegetable stew, pack a few things, and it's time to go.