

13 Stories III  
Story Options 2022

Option #10: Mamie Ross

In 1916, Authorities arrested Mamie Ross, 39, her husband John, and their sons, J.D. and Leo for burglary and receiving stolen goods. After a series of robberies in Cassia County, she claimed her stepsons stole the items and she simply lived in the house where they kept them. The couple and their eight children lived in squalor in their Albion, Idaho home. Most of their kids suffered from serious diseases. Detectives found stolen goods hidden throughout their shack, including between layers of their children's bedding. When officers arrested Mamie, they hoped their children would be given chances for better lives than their parents could provide. Mamie told the judge they had not been in trouble before. She pled guilty upon the advice of her attorney, but stated she and Daniel were innocent and paying for what their boys did. Mamie received a sentence of six months to five years at the Idaho State Penitentiary. She opined she would rather live at the prison if her children had proper care. She then showed up at the Idaho State Penitentiary with Margaret Helen, her two-week old baby who weighed only two pounds at birth. The Warden hesitantly sent the infant to the Children's Home on Warm Springs Avenue. After an enormous public outcry, the penitentiary granted her a reprieve five days later in order to be with her child, her other small children, and her mother in Albion. The Idaho Statesman used the subheading, "Her Pitiful Story," to describe her life before and during incarceration.

