

Eddie, The Junior Year

Mr. Crum's Ass Kicking

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Mr. Crum is not exactly everyone's favorite principal. In fact, no one in the school, student or teacher, likes the seemingly mentally ill administrator. For Mr. Zunde, however, any dealings with Mr. Crum are fun and games. Learning from Mr. Zunde, the tribe has also learned to treat any encounters with Mr. Crum as fun and games, at least to the extent that they can get away with it. Over the last year, Kathy and Paula in particular have learned not to put up with any of Mr. Crum's bullshit.

On the way to lunch, Eddie, Mark, and Braden walk from their lockers to the lunchroom. Waiting in the school lobby for the rest of the tribe to arrive, Eddie, wondering who is participating in the four-way meet after school today, asks Mark and Braden, "who are we up against today?" Braden replies, "it don't matter none. We're kicking all three of their asses!" Mark tells Eddie, "you should know better than to ask Braden that question." Eddie replies, "I was just wondering because Kathy mentioned something about college scouts attending today's meet." Mark concludes, "we must be up against someone good." Braden informs Mark, "none of them are any good! They always get their ass kicked, and we're the ones always doing the ass kicking!" Mark concedes, telling Braden, "you do have a point."

Kathy walks up with Paula, and the group is almost together. Kathy asks, "where's Bobby B.?" Mark replies, "he's probably standing in front of his locker doing curls with his books before lunch." With a slick comeback, Eddie

asks, "Bobby B. has books?" Mark replies, "yeah. He has one book. The title is 'Taking Proper Care of the Shot-Put.'" Kathy laughs, telling the group, "hey now! That wouldn't be a book. That would be only one sheet of paper!" Mark suggests, "we'll make it into a book. That will keep him really busy."

Just then, Mr. Crum walks out of his office, seeing most of the tribe congregated in the lobby. Erroneously thinking that trouble is brewing, Mr. Crum walks briskly toward the group. Mr. Crum is suddenly intercepted by a guy named Wendell Wadler who goes by the name Snake, as evidenced by the name 'Snake' embroidered on the back of his denim jacket. Snake greets Mr. Crum with a sucker punch to his less than developed abdominal area. Snake yells out, "that's for calling my parents when I was cutting class!" Snake continues to rough up Mr. Crum, who yells out, "help! Someone, help me!"

Standing fifteen feet away, Eddie exclaims, "wow! Mr. Crum is fighting in school!" Braden laughs, and exclaims, "somebody, get a teacher!" Kathy replies, "that's a good idea! I think I'll do that!" Kathy runs over to the lunchroom, and informs the teacher who has lunchroom duty this month that a fight has broken out. Kathy returns with Mr. Harrison, the permanent substitute, finding Mr. Crum sitting on the ground held in a headlock by Snake as he annoyingly grinds his knuckles back and forth across Mr. Crum's balding head.

As Eddie and the tribe watch, Mr. Harrison, yells out, "you two! Break it up! Break it up!" Getting a closer look and realizing that Mr. Crum is involved, Mr. Harrison exclaims, "someone, break this up!" Braden politely informs Mr. Harrison, "we got a meet this afternoon. If I break this up, he might suspend my ass. I don't want to get suspended before this meet!" Echoing the sentiment, Mark, loud enough for Mr. Crum to hear, says, "yeah! We don't want to get suspended for fighting in school." Joining in, Eddie tells Mr. Harrison, "we did what he always tells us to do, which is to get a teacher."

As a crowd gathers to watch the principal receive his ass kicking, Mr. Harrison rushes over to the administrative area, instructing Mrs. Marlowe to get Mr. Zunde to the school lobby as fast as possible. The announcement is made, "Mr. Zunde, please report to the school lobby immediately. Mr. Zunde, please report to the school lobby immediately." In the physical education office, Mr. Zunde tells Mr. Frazier and Mr. Chubin, "Mrs. Marlowe repeated herself. This sounds like a fight. I'll be right back." Mr. Zunde stands up and, accompanied by Mr. Frazier and Mr. Chubin, heads to the school lobby.

Arriving at the scene and seeing the entire tribe standing together, Mr. Frazier comments, "uh oh. This doesn't look too good." Breaking through the crowd that has developed, Mr. Zunde sees Mr. Crum being held by Wadler in a headlock. Mr. Zunde tells Wadler and Mr. Crum, "both of you! Break it up! Now!" Looking up and seeing Mr. Zunde standing over him, Wadler releases Mr. Crum and makes a run for it. Escaping down the hall, Wadler is fortunate enough to not be chased down by anyone. If Wadler were attacking someone from the tribe, he would have been chased down by at least a half-dozen people. Attempting to stand up, Mr. Crum stumbles a few times, and finally manages to get vertical. Now that the situation is under control, Mr. Chubin heads back to the gym while Mr. Zunde and Mr. Frazier sort things out.

As Mr. Crum explains to Mr. Zunde what happened, Mr. Frazier is discussing the situation with the tribe. Mr. Frazier asks, "how did all this start?" Full of energy, Braden explains, "we were hanging around, waiting for Bobby B. to show up. That guy, whoever he is, came up and gave Mr. Crum a sucker punch. Then, he put Mr. Crum's ass in a headlock and was giving him a bad-ass noogie. I'm glad I wasn't on the other end of that noogie! None of us wanted to get in the middle of that shit! We got a big meet today, and we didn't want to get suspended." Mark adds, "Kathy went to get Mr. Harrison. We did what Mr. Crum always told us to do, which is to get a teacher. Apparently, that didn't go over too well." Mr. Frazier asks, "who was the student that was in the fight?" Eddie replies, "Wendell Wadler. He goes by the name Snake. He's pretty much an

asshole.” Quite relieved, Mr. Frazier tells the group, “good. You guys did exactly what you were supposed to do. I can’t see how this is going to be an issue.”

Mr. Frazier perhaps spoke a bit too soon. Mr. Crum exclaims, “everyone! In my office now!” Kathy, who has had enough of Mr. Crum’s shit this year, sarcastically replies, “everyone? Does that mean you want all the teachers and students in the school to report to your office?” Mr. Crum exclaims, “no! Of course not!” Kathy motions to the rest of the tribe with her head to follow her as she walks to the lunchroom. The tribe follows, prompting Mr. Crum to exclaim, “all of you! Get back here! Now!” Kathy turns around and, admonishing Mr. Crum, explains, “Mr. Crum, this is a school. You’re expected to use proper and understandable English. I’m sure you’d agree that if you had better qualified whom you are addressing, you might have obtained the cooperation that you were apparently seeking. But, as it stands, by your own admission, your use of the word ‘everyone’ is vague and misleading.” In response to Kathy’s lecture, Mr. Crum verbalizes specifically whom he wants to report to his office, which includes the entire tribe. Mr. Zunde and Mr. Frazier join the meeting, knowing that it is going to be an interesting one.

As the tribe stands comfortably close together in Mr. Crum’s office, the words “Wendell Wadler, please report to the administrative office immediately” are heard over the public address system. Eddie comments, “I wonder why they’re calling that jerk to the office. By now, he’s probably a mile away from here.” Mitchell replies, “yeah. He’s likely starting his second fight of the day.” Eddie tells Mitchell, “either that, or he’s headed to the knife shop.” Mr. Crum listens to the commentary, but has nothing to say at the moment. A minute later, Eddie suggests to Mr. Crum, “you might as well start your meeting. Wadler’s not going to show up.” Mr. Crum exclaims, “I’m running this meeting, not you!” Using a highly sarcastic tone, Kathy tells Mr. Crum, “waiting.” Mr. Crum knows not to respond to Kathy’s sarcastic innuendo, for it will get him nowhere but in a deeper hole.

Realizing that Wadler is not showing up, Mr. Crum opens the meeting by stating, "I want to know what happened out there just a few minutes ago." Quick with an answer, Braden responds, "it looks to me like you got your ass kicked." Snickering is heard from the tribe, prompting Mr. Crum to exclaim, "I'm not in the mood for this today!" Paula asks, "does that mean we can go to lunch now?" Mr. Crum, who falls into the same trap every time, exclaims, "no! I'm just getting started!"

Resorting to asking pointed and specific questions, Mr. Crum asks, "I want to know which one of you people were involved in this!" Eddie replies, "none of us. We were just standing around, waiting for Bobby B. and Erika." In a heated tone, Mr. Crum asks Eddie, "do you expect me to believe that?" Eddie calmly replies, "yes. As a matter of fact, I do." Mr. Crum bluntly tells Eddie, "for the record, I don't believe you!" Eddie sarcastically replies, "fine, then. Have it your way. We were all involved because we didn't stop the fight. So was Mr. Harrison because he didn't break up the fight. And, so were the other fifty people who were standing around watching you get your ass kicked. So, why are you singling us out?" Mr. Zunde and Mr. Frazier stand with their arms crossed, both wondering where Mr. Crum is going with his inquisition.

Hearing but not understanding what Eddie just explained, Mr. Crum informs Eddie, exclaiming, "I know you people were involved somehow! None of you broke up the fight!" Approaching the problem from another angle, Braden responds, exclaiming, "what are we gonna break up the fight for? All you ever tell us to do is to go and find a teacher! So, that's exactly what we did! Kathy went and found a teacher. A lot of good that did you. You got your ass kicked, and you got your head noogied! And, the teacher didn't do shit to break up the fight! It sounds like to me like all your school policies in that book on the shelf ain't worth a shit." Mr. Crum yells out, "one of you could have broken it up!" Mark informs Mr. Crum, "we have a big track meet this afternoon. We didn't want to get suspended."

Pressing the question, Mr. Crum smugly informs the group, “some of you must have been in on this! I’m going to get to the bottom of this.” Kathy replies, “waiting.” Eddie then informs Mr. Crum, “you’re crazy. If any of us were involved with Wadler, we’d be kicking his ass. And, we certainly wouldn’t be kicking his ass on school grounds. And, by the way, if this did happen off school grounds, Wadler would be laying on the ground, wondering when the ambulance was going to show up.” Still on a rampage, Mr. Crum bluntly tells Eddie, “some of you must have been involved, and I want to know who it was!” Eddie replies, “why don’t you ask Wadler? He’s the one that kicked your ass.” Mr. Crum, acting irrational, replies, “because he’s not here!”

Purely to annoy Mr. Crum, Eddie instructs the principal, asking, “why don’t you have Mrs. Marlowe call Wadler to the office?” Mr. Crum exclaims, “she already did!” Taking control of Mr. Crum’s meeting, Eddie suggests, “Wadler could have left school grounds. Maybe you should give him detention. Wait a second. Wadler kicked your ass. That’s probably worth a one-day suspension. No. On second thought, it’s his first offense. Just let it slide.” Mr. Crum exclaims, “I’m running this meeting, not you!”

As the heated argument continues, Mr. Zunde whispers to Mr. Frazier, “I’d stop this now, but I want to see where Crum takes this.” Mr. Frazier replies, “he doesn’t have a leg to stand on. It sounds like he’s gone deep sea fishing in a rain puddle.” Mr. Zunde laughs, and informs Mr. Frazier, “we’ll stop this when he uses the ‘S’ word.” The ‘S’ word is “suspension”, which is usually where Mr. Zunde draws the line. But, in the meantime, Mr. Crum and Mr. Frazier stand back with their arms crossed and watch the free entertainment.

Kathy points out to Mr. Crum, “in case you totally missed it, Wadler said to you, ‘that’s for calling my parents when I was cutting class!’ That sounds to me like he has an issue with you. So, why are you bothering us?” Mr. Crum hammers his fist on the desk, yelling out, “that’s it! Unless I get some answers, everyone in this room will be given detention!” Kathy boldly tells Mr. Crum, “I’m not

going to detention. I have a track meet this afternoon. So, I won't be able to fit detention into my schedule." Mr. Crum exclaims, "that's enough out of you!" Kathy interrupts, telling Mr. Crum, "and, that's enough out of you! Every time you have an itty bitty little problem, you call us all into your office and act like a complete jerk! All we were doing was standing around waiting for Bobby B. and Erika! And, do I have to remind you of all that other shit you pulled earlier this year? None of that went anywhere, and neither will this!" Now angry with Kathy, Mr. Crum exclaims, "that does it, young lady! You're going to detention!" Kathy replies, "issue all the detention you want. See if I care. I'm not going because I have a track meet this afternoon. My schedule is booked." Knowing that she can go back into the past and fix any mess she causes, Kathy really tugs the line with Mr. Crum.

Mr. Zunde interrupts, boldly telling Mr. Crum, "Kathy is not going to detention. And, neither will anyone else in this room be going to detention. It's obvious that you're a bit on the angry side right now since you were just involved in a fight. Your adrenaline levels are quite elevated at the moment, so you're making decisions based upon emotion rather than logic. Kathy did exactly what she was supposed to do, which was to find a teacher. And, I'll take this opportunity to remind you that, in the past, you have attempted to suspend at least three students in this room on multiple occasions for breaking up fights in the past. If you had acted more rationally during those instances, someone might have stepped in and broken up the fight today. I really don't see that you have a case at all. Considering the importance of the meet this afternoon, if you do send anyone to this room to detention, you can be certain that I'll be discussing the matter with Dr. Brooks. And, let me remind you why Dr. Brooks hired me to begin with." Mr. Crum, hit with a sudden dose of reality, replies, "that won't be necessary."

Mr. Crum sits back in his chair, suddenly realizing that Mr. Zunde is right. Mr. Crum is quite angry because a student kicked his ass. Since the perpetrator is no where to be found, Mr. Crum is desperately looking for a scapegoat. Trying to save face, Mr. Crum announces,

“okay. For now, I’m not sending anyone to detention.” Knowing exactly what Mr. Crum is going to say next, Kathy orates in perfect sync with Mr. Crum, “but, I am going to have my eyes on every single one of you.” Kathy then rolls her eyes, telling Mr. Crum, “where have we heard that before?” Mr. Crum exclaims, “that’s enough! Everyone, get out of here! Now!” Wasting no time, the tribe leaves, followed by Mr. Zunde and Mr. Frazier.

In the school lobby, Mr. Zunde asks the group, “what exactly happened earlier?” Braden explains, “that Wadler guy gave Crum a sucker punch, and gave him a noogie. We could have broken it up, but we didn’t want to get suspended because of the meet today. So, Kathy went and got a teacher.” Mr. Zunde asks, “that’s it?” Braden replies, “yeah. I don’t know why he’s making a big deal about it.” Mr. Zunde curiously asks, “I wonder why Mr. Crum didn’t invite Mr. Harrison to his meeting.” Kathy replies, “apparently, Mr. Harrison isn’t included in ‘everybody’.

Imagine that.” Mr. Frazier tells the group of athletes, “just hang low for the rest of the day, and we’ll see you after school.” Mr. Zunde and Mr. Frazier head back to the gym. The tribe heads to the lunchroom, now getting fifteen minutes for lunch.