

Eddie, The Junior Year

The Lunchroom Confrontation

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Lunchtime arrives, which seems to be everyone's favorite subject this year. This is, perhaps, because it is not the track season, and this is the only time they get to spend time with each other during the day. The tribe meets in the lunchroom, taking their usual seat by the window. A teacher is always present in the lunchroom in the event a fight breaks out. Today, the lunchroom monitor is Miss Starr, who sits at the end of a table getting ahead on her lesson planning.

Now that they are almost finished with lunch, the tribe plans to head outside. Mr. Crum, for some reason, walks into the lunchroom, and talks with Miss Starr. Eddie, seeing Mr. Crum, mentions to the group, "someone must have an overdue library book." Kathy laughs, and tells Eddie, "you're beginning to sound a little like Mr. Zunde." Everyone who remembers the connotation from last year also begins laughing. For anyone in the group who does not know, Kathy explains, "last year, when they took Paul Mahoney back to the sanitarium, a police officer told Mr. Crum, 'you just keep sending late students to detention and looking for overdue library books.'" Mr. Zunde has since capitalized on that phrase.

Mr. Crum and Miss Starr stand up and walk toward the tribe's table. Braden asks, "okay, which one of you has the overdue library book?" Mark comically replies, "you mean, this school has a library? I've never seen it." Eddie answers, telling Mark, "that's the rumor, bro."

Mr. Crum and Miss Starr arrive at the table where the tribe is seated. Mr. Crum announces to the tribe, "Miss Starr is here as my witness." Miss Starr, standing to the side behind Mr. Crum, is mimicking his announcement. She then shakes her head, indicating some verbal nonsense is about to be upchucked by Mr. Crum.

Mr. Crum tells Kathy and Paula, "you can't wear those shirts to school. I believe they are indecent." Eddie remarks, "really? I think they are very decent." Hearing Eddie's comment, Miss Starr tries to conceal her laughter. Mr. Crum tells Eddie, "this does not concern you. So, please keep your mouth shut." Mr. Crum's brash comment does not sit well with Kathy, or anyone else seated at the table. The whole tribe is now awaiting Mr. Crum's next move.

Mr. Crum tells Kathy and Paula, "now, let's get back to what I was saying. You two can't wear shirts like those to this school." Kathy questions Mr. Crum, and asks, "so, you're saying that I am not allowed to wear this shirt in this school?" Mr. Crum replies, "exactly." Kathy stands up, and takes her shirt off. She places her shirt in her purse, and sits back down. Paula, seeing what Kathy just did, also stands up and removes her shirt, and sits back down. Everyone in the lunchroom turns around to watch, as Kathy and Paula act as if nothing unusual just happened. Everyone in the lunchroom cheers, seeing what the girls just did.

Under their shirts, Kathy and Paula are wearing their gym tops, which look like a very fashionable sports bra. Miss Starr can no longer conceal her laughter. Mr. Crum turns about as red as a ripe tomato. Raising his voice, Mr. Crum abruptly tells Kathy and Paula, "I want to see you two in my office right now!" Paula begins to stand up, but Kathy kicks Paula's foot under the table, and Paula sits back down. Paula figures Kathy is up to something, for they know each other well.

Mr. Crum, seemingly being ignored by Kathy and Paula, exclaims, "what are you waiting for?" Kathy tells Mr. Crum, "your sentence structure is incorrect. You said 'you two.'

But, you did not qualify to whom or what 'two' refers, and secondly, you implied that you wanted to see us in your office. You never commanded us to go there. This is a school, Mr. Crum. You are expected to use proper English when addressing students. Otherwise, how do you expect us to understand you?" Miss Starr, the English teacher, mentions to Mr. Crum, "she does have a point. You never told them to go to your office."

Mr. Crum yells out, telling Kathy and Paula, "go to my office right now!" Kathy asks Eddie, "you wouldn't happen to have your discus on you, would you?" Eddie replies, "it might be in your car. Do you want me to get it for you?" Kathy whispers to Eddie, "no. But, go tell Mr. Zunde what's happening pronto."

Kathy and Paula follow Mr. Crum to his office. Mr. Crum tells Miss Starr, "I want you there too, as my witness." Miss Starr replies to Mr. Crum's brashness, telling him, "I'll be there in a sec. I need to pick up my stuff." Miss Starr tells Eddie and the rest of the group, "I'll try to get them out of this one. Kathy and Paula did exactly what he asked. Mr. Crum told them, 'you can't wear those shirts to school.' That sounded pretty clear to me."

Miss Starr walks to Mr. Crum's office, as Eddie and Mark head to the gym to find Mr. Zunde. Eddie and Mark find Mr. Zunde, and explain to him what just happened in the lunchroom. Eddie then tells Mr. Zunde, "Kathy told us to come and tell you."

Mr. Zunde asks, "so, let me get this straight. They were wearing their gym clothes under their shirts, and they took their shirts off?" Eddie replies, "yeah. They have gym later, so they just wore their gym tops instead of a bra." Mr. Zunde asks, "so, what's the problem?" Mark replies, "Mr. Crum." Mr. Zunde responds, "yeah, stupid question on my part. I can't argue with that." Mr. Zunde tells Eddie and Mark, "this should be entertaining to say the least. Let me go and see what's going on." Mr. Zunde makes his way to Mr. Crum's office to get his daily dose of comedy. Eddie and Mark go outside on the lawn, joining the rest of the tribe.

When Mr. Zunde arrives at Mr. Crum's office, Mr. Crum politely tells Mr. Zunde, "Mr. Zunde, this does not concern you." Mr. Crum then brashly asks, "so, why are you here?" Mr. Zunde reminds Mr. Crum, "now, Mr. Crum. We have been over this again and again. Whenever there is a disciplinary action or potential disciplinary action taken against an athlete, the school board gives me the right to be present. Today, I'm exercising my right to be present. Am I clear?" Mr. Crum replies, "all right, all right. But this is my meeting." Mr. Zunde replies, "don't let me hold you up. Go ahead and get on with it." Kathy tells Mr. Crum, "waiting," which is a highly sarcastic innuendo invented by the tribe.

Mr. Crum tells Kathy, "explain to me why you removed your shirt." Kathy replies, "because you told me to." Mr. Crum tells Kathy, "no, I didn't!" Kathy reminds Mr. Crum, "you said, and I quote, 'you can't wear those shirts to school,' so I took it off. I was just doing what you told me to do." Mr. Crum tells Kathy, "that's not what I intended, and you know that." Kathy replies, "actually, I don't know what you intended. All I know is what you said. If you said what you meant, we wouldn't have this problem right now." Miss Starr, standing next to Mr. Zunde, whispers to him, "she should be an attorney."

Mr. Crum tells Kathy and Paula, "well, I'm going to have to do something about this. And, put your shirts back on." Paula asks Mr. Crum, "so, we can wear our shirts in this school?" Mr. Crum replies, "no! I didn't say that!" Paula asks Mr. Crum, "well, then what do you mean? Seriously, make up your mind already!" Mr. Crum tells Paula, "you can't talk to me that way." Kathy tells Mr. Crum, "she just did, so apparently she is perfectly capable of talking to you that way. If you meant, 'you are not permitted to talk to me in that manner,' you might have gotten your point across. But, no! You're confusing the issue again. How did you ever pass your SAT test?" Mr. Crum tells Kathy and Paula, "I've had enough of the both of you two." Kathy tells Mr. Crum, "that sentence was also poorly structured but, at this point, who's counting. Geesh!"

Miss Starr whispers to Mr. Zunde, "I've heard about these meetings. I can't believe the amount of nonsense going on right now." Mr. Zunde whispers to Miss Starr, "this is what I put up with all the time. In the long run, it's going to go nowhere, but it certainly is entertaining." Mr. Zunde then whispers to Miss Starr, "the next thing will be his edict, which will be more nonsense."

Mr. Crum tells Kathy and Paula, "you have left me no other choice. I am going to suspend both of you." Kathy replies, "so what. See if I care." Paula tells Kathy, "well, at least he finally said something using proper English." Mr. Crum exclaims, "that's enough out of you two!" Kathy tells Paula, "he's back to using unclear English again. That didn't last too long." Mr. Crum, having enough backtalk, asks Kathy, "and, just what is so wrong with what I said?" Kathy explains, "you said, 'that's enough out of you two.' Enough what? Breathing? Talking? Logic? Yeah, that's it! That's enough logic out of us."

Mr. Zunde interjects and asks Mr. Crum, "what exactly are your grounds for suspending them?" Mr. Crum replies, "for one, wearing indecent clothing." Mr. Zunde, thumbing through the school's policy manual, tells Mr. Crum, "this school has no written dress code. If you're challenged, you'll lose."

Bringing up more trumped up charges, Mr. Crum tells Mr. Zunde, "well, they can't talk to me that way! I'm the principal!" Mr. Zunde explains to Mr. Crum, "I've been listening to this entire conversation, and they have not spoken to you in any unacceptable manner. They have, however, commented quite appropriately on your inability to communicate using proper English. I'm sure that Miss Starr will attest to that fact." Mr. Crum brashly replies, "that's not the point, Mr. Zunde!" Kathy responds by telling Mr. Crum, "oh yeah, it is! That's what started this whole shit show!"

Mr. Crum tells Mr. Zunde, "well, I could always suspend them for having overlapping body parts with their boyfriends." Mr. Zunde informs Mr. Crum, "that rule was thrown out a long time ago, probably sometime during the

medieval period.” All bent out of shape, Mr. Crum asks, “when? I don’t remember that!” Mr. Zunde tells Mr. Crum, “Crum, the school board threw that rule out long ago. If the rule were enforced, you’d have to suspend all the wrestlers, football players, basketball players, volleyball players, and no one would be able to touch anyone else. You couldn’t even have a school play the way that rule was written. The school would be empty, because you’d have to suspend everyone and send them home.”

Mr. Crum sits back in his chair and thinks for a second. Mr. Crum tells Mr. Zunde, “nevertheless, stripping in the lunchroom is totally unacceptable behavior. They walked through the school with just their bras on.” Mr. Zunde informs Mr. Crum, “what they are wearing are not bras. What they are wearing are their gym tops. They wear them in gym class. If you suspend Kathy and Paula, you’ll have to suspend every girl who has gym class today.” Mr. Crum tells Mr. Zunde, “well, they look like bras to me.”

Looking at Mr. Crum, Kathy exclaims, “what are you? Some kind of idiot or something? You don’t even know what a bra is?” Kathy pulls her bra out of her purse that she was going to put on after gym class, and holds it up for everyone to see. Kathy exclaims, “this is a bra! What I am wearing now is not a bra! Any questions?” After listening to Kathy’s lecture, Mr. Crum turns red from embarrassment, and has no clue how to respond. Mr. Zunde and Miss Starr, however, do know how to respond, and laugh hysterically at Mr. Crum.

Kathy does not seem to care if she gets suspended. She seems to be intentionally pushing Mr. Crum to his limit, and doing a fine job of it. Since she is in a lose-lose situation, Kathy figures she might as well go for broke. After all, Mr. Crum has never demonstrated any sense of logic, especially when it comes to athletes. And, since it’s not the track season, getting suspended can’t interfere with a track meet. Besides, it’s warm outside, so a day or two off from school is not necessarily a bad thing.

Mr. Crum continues his rant, asking Kathy, “did you just call me an idiot?” Kathy replies, telling Mr. Crum, “no.

I asked you if you are an idiot. There you go again with your poor command of the English language. And, by the way, you never answered that question. And, for the record, I can't tell you how much I appreciate you calling me a stripper." Mr. Crum smugly tells Kathy, "now, now, I didn't call you a stripper." Kathy exclaims, "like hell you didn't! You said, and I quote, 'stripping in the lunchroom is totally unacceptable behavior.' If I was stripping, as you claim, that makes me a stripper. By definition, strippers strip."

Raising his voice, Mr. Crum tells Kathy, "that's not what I meant, and you know it!" Kathy replies, "here we go again! No! I don't know what you meant! I only know what you said! And that's exactly my point! You can't even communicate! How is anyone supposed to know what you mean? And, how did you ever get to be principal of this school? You don't even understand seventh grade English!"

Mr. Zunde whispers to Miss Starr, "Kathy is definitely winning every argument." Miss Starr whispers back, "well, she did get an A in English last year. She's certainly picking his English apart really well. I'm glad to see they actually learned something in my class." Mr. Zunde replies, "and, she got an A in gym class too. If a real fight breaks out, she will surely win."

Mr. Crum and Kathy continue to argue, with Mr. Crum backed into a corner with every point he tries to make. Mr. Crum gets nowhere with Kathy and Paula, who do not care in the least if they get suspended.

Moving on to a different topic, Mr. Crum asks Kathy, "and, what about that comment you made about Eddie having a discus? Is the school's discus in Eddie's possession?" Kathy bluntly tells him, "no." Mr. Crum is obviously on a fishing expedition, looking for more ways to cause trouble. If there is a discus in Eddie's possession, Mr. Crum's logic is that he must have stolen it from the school. Mr. Crum asks, "then, how did Eddie get hold of a discus?" Kathy replies, "I ordered it from Acme. They sell discuses, along with anvils, rocket sleds, bombs, jet

motors, and tornado seeds. Wile E. Coyote on Road Runner orders shit from there all the time. It got delivered just a few minutes after I ordered it, just like on TV.” Miss Starr has to turn around to conceal laughing, not quite believing what she is hearing.

Mr. Crum raises his voice, and tells Kathy, “I’m going to give you one more chance to answer my question, young lady!” Kathy explains, “I bought it for him. It was a present. What’s the matter with you?” Mr. Crum asks, “and just where did you get a discus?” Kathy exclaims, “my father ordered it for me so I can give it to Eddie! Seriously, what is your problem? There’s no law against owning a discus. And besides, Eddie’s discus is none of your business.”

Purely for entertainment purposes, Mr. Zunde allows Mr. Crum’s line of questioning to go to completion. Mr. Zunde then informs Mr. Crum, “all six of the school’s discuses are safely locked up in the equipment room. None of them have been stolen.” Mr. Zunde’s comment ended that discussion rather quickly.

Mr. Crum, who is treading on thin ice, tells Kathy and Paula, “I’m not exactly sure how I am going to deal with this yet. But, I will be calling both of your parents.” Kathy tells Mr. Crum, “go ahead. See if I care. My dad will probably finish the job that Eddie’s father started on your desk.” Kathy’s comment caused an unpleasant flashback in Mr. Crum’s mind. Mr. Crum tells Kathy and Paula, “okay, get out of here for now! Go! Get out of here!” Kathy and Paula leave Mr. Crum’s office, slamming the door very hard as they leave.

Through the door, Kathy and Paula hear Mr. Zunde say, “Crum, you’re not even qualified to get out of bed in the morning. You’ve done nothing but embarrass yourself today. If you want to go ahead and embarrass yourself further, be my guest. I am not going to stop you.” They hear Miss Starr laugh, taking away a little stress from the situation. Mr. Zunde and Miss Starr walk out of Mr. Crum’s office, as Kathy and Paula head outside to join the rest of the group.

Kathy and Paula walk outside, and find the rest of the tribe sitting on the lawn. They fill the others in on what happened in Mr. Crum's office, down to the very last detail. After Kathy and Paula have finished explaining, Kathy tells Eddie, "Mr. Crum said to us, 'get out of here,' so I'm going home. Oh, and by the way, he thinks you stole the school's discus. But, did Mr. Zunde ever set him straight." Eddie asks Kathy, "so, you're going home like right now?" Kathy replies, "yeah. I'm not in the mood for his shit today. He was really vague, so I'm taking what he said to mean that I should go home. And, he's going to try to bust me for cutting class tomorrow. And I don't care." Paula tells Kathy, "I'm coming with you."