

# Eddie, The Sophomore Year

## Mr. O'Brien vs. The Tribe

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**Author's Note:** This outtake could have easily made it into *Eddie, The Sophomore* year but, instead, the dialog between Mr. O'Brien and the tribe regarding injuries sustained by Ambrosini during football tryouts fit the storyline better.

A very rainy day caused many students to wear clothing and footwear other than their normal attire to school today. Eddie, Mark, and the others in the tribe, are wearing boots or work shoes today, carrying their gym shoes in their gym bags. After all, the guys wouldn't want to get their athletic wear all wet and muddy. Eddie, in particular, is wearing the shoes he uses to cut lawns in.

Meeting outside under the canopy before class with the rest of the tribe, Braden comments, "it looks like to me that the rain has let up some." Johnson replies, "good. Maybe we'll get to play football in gym today." Mitchell informs the group, "I saw the field on my way in. It's way too muddy out there. There's no way we're going out for gym class today." Mitchell would be correct, for more rain is in the forecast and there is standing water in the school yard.

Eddie suggests, "we should go check out the field." Mark asks, "why?" Eddie replies, "I don't know. Maybe I can walk around a little, and see if it's really as muddy as Mitchell says it is. Then, I can go in the back door, and

track the mud into Mr. O'Brien's class." Braden grins, exclaiming, "that sounds like a good idea to me! Count me in!" With their shoes already somewhat muddy, the guys take a detour to the side of the school, where they will test the turf before heading in.

Entering the classroom, the guys track mud across the very place Mr. O'Brien will be standing when he presents his lecture in just a few minutes. Stomping their feet hard to get the mud off their shoes, the guys leave Mr. O'Brien a pile of wet mud, which he will be attempting to avoid stepping in all morning, a difficult, if not impossible, task. The guys take their usual seat near the window, intentionally leaving clear evidence of who tracked the mud into the classroom.

Mr. O'Brien, walking through the door, suddenly stops, both surprised and angered by the voluminous mud in his classroom with which he will have to contend all day. Staring over at the tribe, Mr. O'Brien is quite certain who tracked the mud into his classroom.

Before taking attendance, Mr. O'Brien angrily asks, "okay. Which one of you tracked mud into my classroom?" Everyone in the class remains silent, prompting Mr. O'Brien to slyly tell Eddie, "Edward, your shoes look very muddy to me." Eddie looks down at his shoes, calmly replying, "oh. So they are." Seeing six pairs of muddy shoes on the far side of the classroom, Mr. O'Brien addresses Braden, telling him, "Axel. Your shoes look very muddy too." Braden calmly replies, "yeah. I kind of noticed that myself."

Coming to Mark, Mr. O'Brien boldly says, "and, Mark. Were you aware that your shoes are muddy too?" Mark replies, "yeah. It's rainy out. Rain turns dirt into mud. So, what's your point?" As the other students laugh at Mark's treatment of Mr. O'Brien, Mr. O'Brien exclaims, "what's my point? My point is that you guys have tracked mud all over my classroom! That's my point!" Mark informs Mr. O'Brien, "the mud's not all over the classroom, only in the front." Braden interjects, "yeah. I don't see

any mud all over the walls or on the ceiling.” Now angered, Mr. O’Brien exclaims, “that’s not the point.” Mark reminds Mr. O’Brien, “less than 30 seconds ago, you said that was your point.” Adding fuel to the fire, a few voices can be heard from the other side of the classroom, saying, “yeah. You said that was your point,” or “we heard you.” Bobby B. comments, “I guess he doesn’t have a point anymore.”

While Mr. O’Brien is tongue tied, Mitchell informs him, “the field is really muddy. There was no place to clean our shoes off.” Braden adds, “yeah. I missed the bus, so I had to walk to school. There’s a lot of mud out there.” Not expecting an answer, Mr. O’Brien rhetorically asks Braden, “so, how come no one else in this class has muddy shoes?” Braden replies, “maybe they didn’t miss their bus.” Across the room, Lynn Berson comments, “I didn’t miss my bus,” prompting more laughter from the class.

Now hot under the collar and realizing he will get absolutely nowhere with his argument, Mr. O’Brien takes attendance. The guys sit back, expecting more confrontation but, for the time being, none comes.

Mr. O’Brien’s Social Studies class is, to say the least, quite boring. A student once commented that “watching paint dry is more exciting than listening to Mr. O’Brien.” That person would be, of course, Mark. Others have since capitalized on that phrase. Today seems to be starting off as quite the exception.

As Mr. O’Brien pontificates about the exploitation of blue-collar workers by industry, Mark asks Eddie, “what did he say?” Eddie replies, “something about blue-collar workers using wrenches and screwdrivers.” Taking a close look at Mr. O’Brien, Mark tells Eddie, “Mr. O’Brien’s head is shaped like an open-ended box wrench.” Looking at the teacher, Eddie whispers back to Mark, “I see what you mean, bro.”

Overhearing Eddie and Mark’s conversation, Braden mentions, “Mr. Barrett’s head is shaped like a shovel.”

Mark whispers to those around, “yeah. Shovel-face Barrett.” Eddie comments, “I don’t know, bro. With that pointed head, Barrett’s head looks more like a chisel to me.” Johnson interjects, “if anyone has a shovel face around here, it would be Mrs. Tomlin.” Braden quietly replies, “I’ll go with that.” Bobby B. comments, “Mrs. Tomlin’s face looks like someone smashed it with a frying pan.” The guys snicker, catching the attention of those seated nearby. Voicing the consensus, Johnson whispers, “ok. Shovel-face Tomlin and chisel-face Barrett.” Mark whispers, “maybe we can get shovel-face Tomlin in here to shovel out some of this mud.”

Bobby B. whispers, “the Chuckie’s head is shaped like a deformed ball-peen hammer. Mark replies, “yeah, seriously.” Eddie asks, “which end?” Mark replies, “the whole hammer. The ball is his head, and the other end looks like his fat body.” Braden whispers, “the Chuckie’s fat-ass head looks more like a Rugby ball to me. And, his ass looks like an oversized beach ball.” Mark laughs, but reminds Braden, “tools, bro. Tools.”

As Mr. O’Brien begins to suspect that a few students are talking in class, Braden whispers, “Mr. Crum’s fat-ass head looks like a monkey-wrench to me, especially when he opens his big mouth.” Eddie comments, “yeah. And his mouth opens just about as far, especially when he gets really mad.” Mark replies, “Mr. Crum is a monkey wrench.”

Following a one-minute pause in the conversation, Mark mentions, “Mr. Harrison’s two front teeth look like a claw hammer. You can use Mr. Harrison’s teeth to remove nails.” Knowing that Mark is spot on, Eddie laughs under his breath, whispering, “maybe your father can put him to work.” Mark whispers back, “he could. But, Mr. Harrison is so stupid, he wouldn’t know the difference between a nail and a screw.” Low-level snickering breaks out among the tribe, causing Mr. O’Brien to look their way once again.

Familiar with many tools, Eddie whispers, “our eighth-grade math teacher’s head looks like a screwdriver.” Mark

laughs under his breath, and replies, “you must mean Mr. Fitzgerald.” Eddie laughs, and whispers, albeit loud enough for the rest of the tribe to hear, “no. I mean Mr. Fitz slotted-head screw.” Laughter breaks out among the tribe, which does not go unnoticed by Mr. O’Brien.

Interrupting his boring lecture, Mr. O’Brien focuses his attention toward the tribe, asking, “does someone over there have something more important to say than I do?” Learning from Kathy’s treatment of Mr. Crum, Mark succinctly replies, “no.” Not the least bit satisfied with Mark’s nonchalant answer, Mr. O’Brien asks Mark, “would you care to enlighten myself and the rest of the class what you were discussing over there?” Mark, again, simply replies, “no.”

Quite irritated over Mark’s evasive answers, Mr. O’Brien asks the others in the immediate vicinity, “does anyone else over there care to answer my question?” Eddie informs Mr. O’Brien, “Mark did answer your question. You asked him a yes or no question, and he answered you. He said ‘no.’”

Now angered and pacing the floor while he attempts to avoid stepping in the mud, Mr. O’Brien instructs those sitting near Mark, “someone over there had better tell me what the side discussion was all about, otherwise all of you will be headed to the principal’s office.” Attempting to get the tribe out of trouble, Eddie replies, “we were talking about tools that blue-collar workers use.” Mr. O’Brien strongly suspects that Eddie is avoiding the question, just as Mark did. But, learning from Mr. Zunde, the tribe is intentionally forcing Mr. O’Brien to take the long and painstaking route to get his answer.

Wanting further elaboration, Mr. O’Brien asks Eddie, “will you please explain to myself and the rest of the class what the discussion was all about?” Also learning from Kathy, Eddie replies, “no.” Mr. O’Brien exclaims, “someone over there had better answer my question!” Eddie calmly replies, “I did. Your question was a yes - no question. So, since you gave me a choice, I picked ‘no.’” The class

breaks out in laughter, enjoying the break from Mr. O'Brien's boring lecture.

Now hot under the collar, Mr. O'Brien looks over the tribe, asking, "Mr. Mitchell, would you care to explain what the discussion was all about?" Mitchell, who was doing his math homework, replies, "I wasn't part of the discussion." Mr. O'Brien asks, "Mr. Johnson? How about you?" Johnson replies, "no." Going down the row, Mr. O'Brien asks, "Mr. Braden? Any comment?" Braden replies, "I'll tell you, but you ain't gonna wanna hear it." A few students from the other side of the class can be heard commenting, "yeah. Tell us!" It is clear that the rest of the class wants to know what they were missing.

Mr. O'Brien boldly and sarcastically announces, "I'm sure we'll all be interested to hear what you have to say, Mr. Braden." Braden boasts, "yeah. I know. It's kinda funny, if you ask me." Mr. O'Brien asks Braden, "well?" Braden explains, "when you were talking about tools, we were kind of noticing that Mr. Barrett's head is shaped like a chisel, Mrs. Tomlin's head looks like a shovel, and Mr. Crum's head looks like a monkey-wrench. Oh yeah, and Mr. Fitzgerald's head looks like a screwdriver. And, the Chuckie's head looks like a ball-peen hammer. But, if you ask me, the Chuckie's fat-ass head looks more like a Rugby ball. But, that ain't a tool. And, I ain't gonna tell you what his ass looks like." From the other side of the room, many students can be heard, yelling out, "tell us," or "out with it!" Braden remains quiet, but Mark, never missing the chance to mess with Chuckie, tells the class, "the Chuckie's ass looks like one of those huge beach balls." The rest of the students start cracking up, except for Chuckie, who pouts like a four-year old.

Fuming that the students were making fun of his colleagues, if they can even be called that, Mr. O'Brien asks, "oh, really? And, what about my head?" Braden bluntly replies, "we decided your ugly head looks like a box wrench. Anybody can see that." Mr. O'Brien exclaims, "that does it! That absolutely does it! All of you, follow me to the principal's office right now!" Mark

asks, "who?" Mr. O'Brien angrily replies, "you, Edward Bogenskaya, Axel Braden, Gary Mitchell, Robert Bradshaw, and Eric Johnson."

Mr. O'Brien tells the rest of the class, "just sit right here. Mr. Harrison will be here momentarily." Knowing that he is probably already in trouble, not that he even cares, Braden tells Mr. O'Brien, "oh yeah. I almost forgot. Mr. Harrison's front teeth look like a claw-tooth hammer." The class laughs hysterically, and will surely take a close look at Mr. Harrison's front teeth when he arrives. Looking over at the tribe, Mr. O'Brien bluntly and angrily instructs the guys, "follow me." The guys stand up, bang the rest of the mud off their shoes as they walk across the classroom, and follow Mr. O'Brien to the principal's office, smiling as they all leave.

Arriving at the administrative offices, Mr. O'Brien explains the issue at hand to Mrs. Marlowe. Mrs. Marlowe, in turn, gets on the phone, explaining to Mr. Crum that Mr. O'Brien has six unruly students sitting outside his office. Mr. Crum opens his door, instructing the tribe, "all of you! Get into my office immediately." On his way in, Mark whispers to Mrs. Marlowe, "hey. Can you get Mr. Zunde over here for us?" Mrs. Marlowe, who fully understands that, when disciplinary action is taken against an athlete, Mr. Zunde has the right to be present, nods her head. Once Mr. Crum's door is closed, Mrs. Marlowe calls Mr. Zunde.

After shuffling papers for two minutes, during which time the guys were cleaning their shoes on Mr. Crum's carpet, Mr. Crum opens the meeting, asking Mr O'Brien, "okay. What exactly is going on here?" Mr. O'Brien explains, "I caught these students talking in class. What really bothers me was the subject matter of their discussion." Mr. Crum interrupts, asking, "and, exactly what were they talking about?" Mr. O'Brien would have gotten to that next, but Mr. Crum apparently likes to hear himself speak. Mr. O'Brien explains, "they were talking about teachers' heads looking like certain tools. They were very insulting, if you ask me. From what I gathered,

their discussion was very mean spirited. And, these guys tracked a lot of mud into my classroom this morning.”

Quietly entering Mr. Crum’s office during the discussion, Mr. Zunde stands next to Eddie near the bookcase, wondering what flavor of entertainment lies ahead. Not really wanting Mr. Zunde participating in the discussion, Mr. Crum asks, “Mr. Zunde. Exactly why are you here today?” Mr. Zunde replies, “if I had to take a wild guess, I’d say I’m here because it appears you are about to discipline six athletes. I’d also venture to guess that, if history serves correctly, you have absolutely no basis for the action you plan to take.” Not exactly telling Mr. Zunde the truth, Mr. Crum exclaims, “I haven’t even heard what the issue is yet!” Mr. Zunde replies, “then, perhaps you should get on with your meeting, and find out. Don’t let me hold you up.”

Not wanting to get into a discussion with Mr. Zunde, for he will lose, Mr. Crum tells Mr. O’Brien, “please continue where you left off.” Mr. O’Brien explains, “as I was saying, these students were comparing certain teacher’s heads to tools, and disrupting my class.” Learning from Mr. Zunde that Mr. O’Brien and Mr. Crum get very irrational when angered, Braden tells Mr. O’Brien, “we weren’t disrupting your class. You were disrupting your own class.” Mark comments, “Mr. O’Brien has no class.” Mr. Zunde now suspects Mr. Crum’s meeting is a total waste of time.

Not wanting to engage the guys, Mr. Crum asks Mr. O’Brien, “what exactly was said?” Mr. O’Brien replies, asking Braden, “Axel, will you please explain to Mr. Crum what the discussion was all about?” Braden replies, “I forgot. That was a long time ago.” Mr. O’Brien replies, “you haven’t forgotten! It was only a few minutes ago!” Braden thinks for a moment, and tells Mr. O’Brien, “I can’t remember.” Mr. O’Brien slyly informs Braden, “you certainly do remember! Don’t try to fool me!” Messing with Mr. O’Brien, Braden replies, “let me think for a minute. Maybe I can remember.” Meanwhile, Eddie



explains to Mr. Zunde why the tribe was called to the principal's office.

After delaying for a minute or so, Braden explains, "oh, yeah. Now I remember. We were noticing that certain teacher's heads look like tools. Yeah. That was it. We decided that Mr. Barrett's head looks like a chisel and Mrs. Tomlin's head looks like a shovel." Mr. Crum exclaims, asking, "that's it?" Mr. O'Brien informs Mr. Crum, "if I recall correctly, they likened your head to a monkey-wrench, and mine to some sort of wrench."

Adding some comedy to the situation, Eddie interjects, "Mr. Fitzgerald's head looks like a flat-head screwdriver. He should change his name to Mr. Fitz slotted-head screw." Mr. Crum angrily asks Eddie, "and, just who is Mr. Fitzgerald?" Hearing Mr. Zunde laugh under his breath a few times during the meeting, Eddie replies, "he tried to teach math in middle school. When his head was turned to the side, you can see him just fine. When he looked right at you, his head kind of just disappeared into thin air."

Adding his own recollection the earlier discussion, Mark mentions, "and, the Chuckie's head looks like a ball-peen hammer." Braden tells Mark, "I still say his fat-ass head looks more like a Rugby ball." Sidestepping the issue at hand, Eddie reminds Mark and Braden, "do you guys remember when we took the Chuckie out in middle school that time when we were playing dodge ball?" Braden exclaims, "yeah! I remember that! I thought that was the end of the road for the Chuckie!" Fueling the fire, Mark comments, "the end of the road for Chuckie was the day he was born."

Interrupting the conversation, Mr. Crum exclaims, "okay! Okay! That's enough! I've heard enough out of all of you!" Mark replies, "we were only getting started." Addressing those in the room, Mr. Crum exclaims, "as I said, I've heard enough out of all of you! Everyone in this room will be looking at detention!" Mark asks Mr. Crum, "does that include you and Mr. O'Brien too?" Mr. Crum

exclaims, “that’s enough out of you!” Mark asks, “does that mean I can leave now? I’m missing class.”

Not wanting to engage Mark any further, Mr. Crum decrees, “talking in class is a serious issue. What concerns me more is what was being discussed during class time. So, as I was saying, everyone in this room will be looking at a three-day detention.” Eddie informs Mr. Crum, “I can’t go.” Mr. Crum angrily asks Eddie, “and, just why can’t you go to detention?” Eddie replies, “I have to go to work after school. I have lawns to cut. The rain has me all backed up.” Mr. Crum replies, “there’s nothing that I can do about that.” Eddie tells Mr. Crum, “fine, then. I’ll just stay home tomorrow because I’m sick, and cut the lawns then.”

Mr. Zunde, who has been perusing the school’s policy manual during the discussion, interjects, telling Mr. Crum, “if I may interrupt, sir, from what I have heard, there is no grounds for issuing detention for an isolated instance of talking in class.” Mr. Crum sarcastically asks Mr. Zunde, “and, just what is the basis for your observation, Mr. Zunde?” Mr. Zunde confidently replies, “the school’s policy manual explicitly states that the remedial action for talking in class is detention, but only after two prior warnings have been issued during the same class period. Unless two warnings were issued by Mr. O’Brien to these students, you have no basis for any disciplinary action.” Unknown to Mr. Crum, Mr. Zunde has already questioned Eddie, and found out that no warnings were issued.

Hoping for evidence supporting his case, Mr. Crum asks Mr. O’Brien, “have you given these students any warnings?” Mr. O’Brien replies, “well, technically no. But, the talking went on for at least ten or fifteen minutes. I looked their way several times, and they all knew I had them under observation.” Mr. Crum replies, “that should be good enough.” Mr. Zunde boldly replies, “no, it’s not. Unless Mr. O’Brien verbally issued a warning, you have no case. Looking at a student hardly constitutes a warning. Using your logic, every student in the class was warned

about talking in class simply because Mr. O'Brien just happened to glance their way sometime during class."

Realizing he has been cornered, Mr. Crum exclaims, "but, what about the subject matter of their discussion, Mr. Zunde? I simply cannot have students talking about teachers in the way these guys have!" Mr. Zunde replies, "there's no exception in the policy manual that addresses the content of any conversation while talking in class. Even if the students were discussing blowing up the school, you still have no case for detention. Although, if that were the case, I would strongly advise notifying the police. But, as it stands, you have absolutely no case here today."

Now extremely angered, Mr. O'Brien exclaims, "and, what about the mud these guys tracked into my classroom? I'll have to deal with that all day!" Mr. Zunde responds, "if you haven't noticed, the hallways are all wet and muddy. That's why the school has a custodial staff. Call them. I'm sure they'll be glad to take care of your problem." Mr. Crum naively asks, "what? The hallways are all wet and muddy?" Braden informs Mr. Crum, "yeah. In case you hadn't noticed, it's raining out there. And, there's mud all over your carpet, too."

Mr. Crum stands up and, seeing the muddy mess that was dragged into his office, exclaims, "that does it! Everyone here is looking at detention!" Mark comments, "I'll be glad to look at detention. I'm just not going to go." Johnson asks, "how do you look at detention, anyway?" Eddie replies to Johnson, "cross eyed." Being that it is not track season, it seems the guys are pushing Mr. Crum and Mr. O'Brien to the limit.

Interrupting the impending verbal war, Mr. Zunde informs Mr. Crum, "Crum, you have no case regarding these guys tracking mud into the school. If you send these guys to detention for tracking mud into the school, you'll have to send half the students in this school to detention. And, the fields are a mess. It doesn't look like

we'll be going out for physical education for the next two days."

Mulling over the situation for a minute or so as he frantically flips through the school's policy manual looking for cause to send the guys to detention, Mr. Crum reluctantly decrees, "okay. For right now, I will not be taking any action. But, I will have my eyes on every single one of you. And, I can't tell you how much I appreciate being called a monkey wrench. Now, all of you, get back to class!" Now dismissed, everyone heads back to class.

Out in the school lobby, Mr. Zunde intercepts the guys, and asks Eddie, "what was that all about?" Eddie replies, "Mr. O'Brien was talking about how blue-collar workers are exploited by industry. He was full of his usual crap. I mean like, my father is a blue collar worker, and no one exploits him." Mark interjects, "so is mine. No one exploits my father either." Eddie then explains, "so, Mark noticed that Mr. O'Brien's head is shaped like an open-end box wrench. Then, we were talking about how other teachers head were shaped like other tools."

Mr. Zunde laughs, telling the guys, "good observations on your guy's part. Well, if Mr. Crum tries to make anything of this, I'm sure it will go nowhere. I'll see you guys in gym class later." Johnson asks, "what are we doing, since it's raining out?" Mr. Zunde replies, "the sophomores will be playing the freshmen in a game of basketball." Johnson replies, "awesome," along with the rest of the tribe.

Mr. Zunde heads back to the gym. The guys head back to class, glad that it is not track season, for, if it were, they would surely have been given detention for trumped-up charges.

As the guys enter the classroom a little later than expected, Mr. O'Brien asks, "and, just where have you guys been?" Braden replies, "Mr. Zunde wanted to see us." Bothered that no disciplinary action came down, Mr. O'Brien asks Braden, "and, just what was that meeting all

about?" Braden replies, "I forgot. I can't remember. You'll have to ask Mr. Zunde." Realizing he will get nowhere, Mr. O'Brien continues his lecture, only to have the bell ring two minutes later.