

## ***Ms. Bixby's Last Day***

**By John David Anderson**

There are six kinds of teachers in the world. I know because we classified them once during indoor recess. First you have your Zombies: those are the ones who have been doing it for a few centuries, since Roosevelt was president- the first Roosevelt, with the broomy mustache from those museum movies. The Zombs speak in a mumbled monotone and come equipped with an armory of worksheets all designed to suck any fun out of the learning process, which doesn't take long, considering how little fun comes included from the start.

Then there are the Caff-Adds. Brand calls them Zuzzers. You can spot them by their jittery hands and bloodshot eyes and the insulated NPR travel mugs they carry around with them. Unlike the Zombs, the Caff-Adds are like little bouncy balls, but you can't really stand to listen to them either because they talk so fast, *zuzzuzzuzz*, like sticking your head in a beehive. Unfortunately, our Spanish teacher is one of those, so not only can't I understand her, but even if I could, I couldn't.

Then you have your Dungeon Masters. The red-pass-wielding ogres who wish paddling was still allowed in schools. The kind who insist on no talking, whether it's reading time, work time, sharing time, lunchtime, after school, before school, the weekend, whatever. You are supposed to just sit still and shut up. Mr. Mattison, the art teacher, is one of those. We draw in absolute silence during art. Graveyard quiet, which is actually fine by me, because it's the one specials class worth concentrating in, though while I'm there I mostly draw pictures of Mr. Matt carrying a club and picking the meat off the bones of the latest student to whisper a word.

Then you've got your Spielberg. They're not nearly as cool as Steven Spielberg. We just call them that because they show movies all the time. Some of them are Zombie Spielbergs.

Mrs. Gredenza falls into this category. She once showed us a film on the life cycle of fruit flies that was pretty gross but also didn't make much sense, seeing as how she was supposed to be teaching us geometry. At least with Spielbergs you often get a chance to doodle or nap or text- that is, if one of the Dungeon Masters hasn't captured your phone yet and fed it to his goblins.

My personal favorites are the Noobs. The overachievers. Fresh picked from the farm. With their bright eyes and their colorful posters recently purchased from a catalog and the way they clap like circus seals when you get a right answer. They don't stay Noobs for long. A year. Maybe two. I don't think it's the students' fault, though. I blame the system.

The last kind we simply call the Good Ones. The ones who make the torture otherwise known as school somewhat bearable. You know when you have one of the Good Ones because you find yourself actually paying attention in class, even if it's not art class. They're the teachers you actually want to go back and say hi to next year. The ones you don't want to disappoint.

Like Ms. B.