

**Block D 2019**

**STAFF ROOM**

*By Richard Dixon*

**CHARACTERS:**

**Administrators:**

Ms. Temerity Blair, Principal - JAYDA

Mr. Tyrone Strong, Vice-Principal - MIN

**Secretaries:**

Mrs. Alice Filer, Head Secretary - ALYSSA

Ms. Wynona Huffle, Assistant Secretary - HEBA

**Counsellors:**

Mr. Scottie Sophto, Counsellor - ELI

Ms. Linda Nere, Counsellor - AREESHA

**Teachers:**

**Physical Education Department:**

Mr. Terry Schortz, Physed Instructor - ROBBIE

Mr. Clay Slabowski, Physed Instructor - ALONZO

**Math/Science Department:**

Mr. Edward Doof, Science Teacher - OWEN

Ms. Ronnie Didjit, Math Teacher - EM

**Practical Arts Department:**

Ms. Betty Planer, Shop Teacher - EMMA

Mr. Sammy Homaker, Foods/Textiles Teacher - DILLINGER

**Social Studies Department:**

Mr. Roland Rantz, Social Studies Teacher - ADEN

Ms. Gina Roamer, Social Studies Teacher - PIXIE

**Performing Arts Department:**

Mr. Turner Bachman, Music Teacher - ALEX

Ms. Sylla Phlake, Drama Teacher - AVELINA

**English Department:**

Miss Belinda Spelling, English Teacher - KIERA

Ms. Pam Writewell, English Teacher - EMMA T.

Madame L'Imparfait, French Teacher - ZEENA

Senor Sanchez, Spanish Teacher -LEON

**Custodians:**

Mrs. Phyllis Bucket, Custodian - SOFIA

Mrs. Molly Moppet, Custodian - BELLE

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 1:

(MOLLY MOPPET is sitting in the staffroom, with her cleaning gear beside her, savouring her morning coffee, a ritual she greatly values.)

MOLLY MOPPET

(sipping with joy)

Ahhhhhhhhh! Nothing like a stiff shot of java in the morning.

(PHYLLIS BUCKET enters.)

MOLLY MOPPET

You the temp?

PHYLLIS BUCKET

Yeah. Got the call a half hour ago. The name's Phyllis. Phyllis Bucket.

MOLLY MOPPET

Molly Moppet. Call me Molly.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

Who am I spozed ta replace?

MOLLY MOPPET

Tommy Vackman.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

What happened to him?

MOLLY MOPPET

Got his hand trapped in a toilet.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

No way.

MOLLY MOPPET

Some kid grabbed his keys, threw 'em in the can, and flushed.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

Jeez.

MOLLY MOPPET

Tommy ran over and stuck his hand in to save 'em.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

Well, yeah!

MOLLY MOPPET

Next thing he knew, his hand was stuck and the kid was gone.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

What he do?

MOLLY MOPPET

Nothin'. 'Bout an hour later, I heard him hollering kind of weak, like a sick cat or somethin'.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

How'd you get his hand out?

MOLLY MOPPET

Didn't. Fire department had to do it.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

Jeez.

MOLLY MOPPET

Poor old guy was pretty shook up. Took the rest of the week off.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

Did they nail the kid that done it?

MOLLY MOPPET

Yeah.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

They kick him out?

MOLLY MOPPET

Just for a day.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

That ain't enough.

MOLLY MOPPET

The kid's a jock star. Basketball's a big deal here.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

That sucks.

MOLLY MOPPET

Nothin' I kin do about it. You got the gym and caf area. Come on, I'll show you.  
(ALICE FILER makes an announcement over the school public address system.)

ALICE FILER

Mr. Doof, your headlights are on. Mr. Doof, your headlights.

(TEMERITY BLAIR enters with TYRONE STRONG. Mr. Strong watches sternly but says nothing.)

TEMERITY BLAIR

Ah, Mrs. Moppet. Is this the temp?

MOLLY MOPPET

Yep. Phyllis, this is Ms. Blair, the principal, and Mr. Strong, the veep.

TEMERITY BLAIR

Phyllis, is it?

PHYLLIS BUCKET

Phyllis Bucket.

TEMERITY BLAIR

There's a big spill in the hall by the caf. A latte, a slushy, and what appears to be some sort of vomit. It's getting tracked everywhere.

MOLLY MOPPET

I'm takin' her down there right now, Ms. Blair.

TEMERITY BLAIR

Good, good. Then you'd better deal with that graffiti outside the woodshop, Mrs. Moppet.

MOLLY MOPPET

The big "F" word?

TYRONE

Yes, the big "F" word.

PHYLLIS

The "F" word? On the school?

MOLLY

BIG. You didn't see it?

TYRONE

Came in on the other side?

TEMERITY

Can't have it there like a billboard where all the cars drive past.

MOLLY MOPPET

I'll do my best, but it's paint, eh?

TEMERITY BLAIR

Just cover it or something.

MOLLY MOPPET

Okay, Ms. Blair.

TYRONE

Or we'll have to have it sandblasted.

(MOLLY MOPPET and PHYLLIS BUCKET exit.)

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 2:

(ALICE FILER makes another announcement.)

ALICE

Ms. Phlake, could you return Mrs. Filer's master key to the office? Ms. Phlake, please return the master key to the office.

TYRONE STRONG

That woman has lost more keys!

TEMERITY BLAIR

The superintendant phoned this morning. We need a brief staff meeting.

TYRONE STRONG

What's up?

TEMERITY BLAIR

More trouble over the toxic fumes in the ventilation system.

TYRONE STRONG

Are we finally getting the gas masks?

TEMERITY BLAIR

It's not in the budget. We're to hand out a copy of the evacuation plan.

TYRONE STRONG

Got it. I'll copy that.

TEMERITY BLAIR

While you're at it, could you call the photocopy people? The big green one is spewing toner.

(TYRONE STRONG and TEMERITY BLAIR exit as ROLAND RANTZ makes an announcement over the P.A.)

ROLAND RANTZ

Ms. Roamer, you're late for the socials department meeting. Ms. Roamer, you're late.

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 3:

(Mr. SOPHTO and LINDA NERE enter and get coffee while they talk.)

MR. SOPHTO

Jenny says we should postpone the marriage.

LINDA NERE

For heaven's sake why?

MR. SOPHTO

Her mother has allergies in July.

LINDA NERE

Why didn't she bring that up six months ago?

MR. SOPHTO

She can be difficult.

LINDA NERE

My ex's mother was a saint. She made my wedding dress, you know.

MR. SOPHTO

Really? What did she use for material?

LINDA NERE

She bought some polyester pant suits at a thrift store. All kinds of different colours.

MR. SOPHTO

That's creative.

LINDA NERE

Then she took them all apart and made a colourful sort of tent.

MR. SOPHTO

Your wedding dress was a tent?

LINDA NERE

I used to be much larger.

Mr. SOPHTO

Larger?

LINDA NERE

I tipped the scales. That was before I became a high school counsellor.

Mr. SOPHTO

Did you diet?

LINDA NERE

No, I counselled.

Mr. SOPHTO

It's a tough job all right.

LINDA NERE

How'd your meeting go with Alice Buffer's parents?

Mr. SOPHTO

The dad never showed. Business trip. The mom kept answering her cell phone while we talked.

LINDA NERE

Make any headway?

Mr. SOPHTO

The mom says it's the school's fault that Alice smokes dope and drinks hard liquor between classes.

(ALICE FILER makes an announcement.)

ALICE FILER

The red Mazda, license number SFA-626, you're parked in front of a fire hydrant. Move it now or be towed! That's the red Mazda, license number SFA-626, move it now, and I mean right now!

LINDA NERE

Ms. Blair wants me to meet with Bobby Grabstock in B Block. Inappropriate touching.

Mr. SOPHTO

Take my advice and don't meet with him alone. That kid's scary.

LINDA NERE

Ms. Blair says to go easy on him.

Mr. SOPHTO

Why?

LINDA NERE

His mom's on the school board.

(ROLAND RANTZ makes another announcement.)

ROLAND RANTZ

Ms. Roamer, we're waiting for you. Ms. Roamer, we don't want to start without you.

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 4:

(EDWARD DOOF and RONNIE DIDJIT enter.)

LINDA NERE

Mr. Doof, did you hear the announcement about your headlights?

EDWARD DOOF

Eh?

Mr. SOPHTO

Your headlights!

EDWARD DOOF

Headlice? What's this about headlice!

RONNIE DIDJIT

Did he leave them on again?

LINDA NERE

Apparently.

RONNIE DIDJIT

(shouting.)

Your lights, Edward!

EDWARD DOOF

You're rather nice too, Ronnie. Now where's my coffee cup?

(He blunders offstage to find his coffee cup.)

Mr. SOPHTO

Retirement can't come a moment too soon for the poor old fellow.

RONNIE DIDJIT

He's so befuddled outside his classroom. But when he's in the science lab, it's like he's young again.

LINDA NERE

Face it, Ronnie, it's becoming a serious safety issue.

RONNIE DIDJIT

It's not Edward's fault some boys built a pipe bomb in his chemistry class.

Mr. SOPHTO

Just who's fault is it, Ronnie?

RONNIE DIDJIT

Society's.

(EDWARD DOOF fumbles in with a large coffee mug.)

LINDA NERE

Mr. Doof, that's the vice-principal's mug.

EDWARD DOOF

(ambling over to the group.)

Ronnie, have you seen my spectacles?

RONNIE DIDJIT

(shouting)

You're wearing them, Edward!

EDWARD DOOF

Great Scott!

Mr. SOPHTO

Thank you!

DOOF

So I am. So I am. Whatever next!

(He sits and slurps his coffee.)

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 5:

(GINA ROAMER enters, looking at her watch.)

GINA ROAMER

My goodness, I'm late again.

LINDA NERE

Roland Rantz is looking for you, Gina.

RONNIE DIDJIT

He's been having a fit on the P.A., Gina. There's a socials meeting.

GINA ROAMER

Roland can be a bit difficult.

GINA ROAMER

I was up late marking essays on the First World War. Half of them were copied straight off the internet.

RONNIE DIDJIT

Give them zero.

GINA ROAMER

Their parents think it's okay to cheat. One kid's dad said, "Why the hell do you think I pay six hundred bucks a year for high-speed internet?"

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 6:

(Sammy HOMAHER enters.)

SAMMY HOMAHER

Good morning, Gina, Ronnie, Mr. Doof.

EDWARD DOOF

Eh?

GINA ROAMER

Hi, Sammy. How you doing? (exits)

SAMMY HOMAHER

Terrible. Mouse droppings everywhere.

(MOLLY MOPPET and PHYLLIS BUCKET enter opposite sides.)

MOLLY MOPPET

The photocopy machine blew a gasket, Phyllis. We got to scrub toner off the copy room walls.

PHYLLIS

Anyone hurt?

MOLLY MOPPET

Nope. But one of the secretaries looks like a chimney sweep after a ten hour shift.

(MOLLY and PHYLLIS exit as BETTY PLANER enters and gets her coffee.)

BETTY PLANER

Ahoy mateys.

SAMMY HOMAHER

Morning, Betty. Are the shop kids finished with my Corolla yet? It's been like a week now.

BETTY PLANER

I've been meaning to talk to you about that.

SAMMY HOMAHER

There's more to it isn't there? My little granny drove it like a bat outta hell.

BETTY PLANER

It's going to take a little longer than we thought.

EDWARD DOOF

Ms. Planer, would you be so good as to inspect my motor car for mechanical damage. I fear the old girl is at the point of total collapse.

BETTY PLANER

I'll take a look tomorrow, Mr. Doof!

EDWARD DOOF

Eh?

BETTY PLANER

(shouting)

Tomorrow!

(ALICE FILER makes an announcement.)

ALICE

Mrs. Moppet, there's a small fire in the dumpster. Mrs. Moppet, a small fire in the dumpster behind the school. All hands on deck.

(MOLLY MOPPET and PHYLLIS BUCKET enter and cross.)

BETTY PLANER

Nothing like the smell of burning garbage in the morning.

SAMMY HOMAKER

Or burning mouse doo doo.

DOOF

Doo be doo be doo...

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 7:

(SYLLA PHLAKE enters.)

SYLLA PHLAKE

Sammy! I'm so glad I've found you. I've got a wonderful idea for cross curricular collaboration, for the spring musical.

SAMMY HOMAHER

I'm a bit... busy...these days Sylla...

SYLLA PHLAKE

As you know, we're doing "Grease", and I thought it'd be such fun if you and your foods students could serve the audience COOKIES that look like CONDOM PACKAGES!

SAMMY HOMAHER

Condom packages?

SYLLA PHLAKE

You know how Rizzo thinks she's pregnant in the musical? Well, it would be SO SYMBOLIC if the audience was EATING COOKIE CONDOMS!

SAMMY HOMAHER

I'm not sure admin would be comfortable with that, Sylla.

RONNIE DIDJIT

I thought "Grease" was a nice, clean musical, suitable for high school, Ms. Phlake. (all laugh)

BETTY PLANER

I don't think the administration would allow cookies that look like condom packages, Ms. Phlake. And about the "shaggin' wagon" you asked me to build...

SYLLA PHLAKE

Oh, PLEASE! It's ART, for god's sake! ART! And ART is about TRUTH!

(SYLLA dances out wildly in a gypsy way, snapping her fingers and crying out "Ai, ai, ai, ai!" The others are somewhat intimidated by the display.)

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 8:

(Turner Bachman enters.)

TURNER BACHMAN

Has anyone seen Sylla Phlake?

RONNIE DIDJIT

She just...danced that way, Mr. Bachman.

SAMMY and BETTY

Ai Ai Ai!

TURNER BACHMAN

Her actors are supposed to be working with the senior band on the "Grease" numbers. We're all waiting, and there's no sign of any actors.

BETTY PLANER

She probably got the dates mixed up again.

(ALICE FILER makes an announcement.)

ALICE FILER

Phebiola Bottle, report to the office. Phebiola Bottle, to the office, right now, please.

(BELINDA SPELLING and MS. WRITWELL enter.)

BELINDA SPELLING

Good morrow, good morrow, fair ladies and gentlemen!

Pam WRITWELL

Hey everybody.

BELINDA

Come on Pam you can do better.

PAM

I need a coffee!

TURNER BACHMAN

Did you see Ms. Phlake, Miss Spelling?

BELINDA SPELLING

Why yes. She was dancing down the halls like a whisp of gossamer in a spring breeze.

SENOR SANCHEZ (entering)

Hola! Buenas dias Mr. Bachman! You look like you've had too much jalapeño my friend.

TURNER BACHMAN

I have my orchestra waiting in the theatre.

SENOR SANCHEZ

...but the actors haven't shown up?

BELINDA SPELLING

How sad! The orchestra waiting there like a jilted bride at a June wedding.

RONNIE DIDGET

You've sure got a way with words Ms. Spelling. (exits)

(SYLLA PHLAKE enters, dancing.)

SYLLA PHLAKE

Grease is the way we are feeling!

TURNER BACHMAN

Ms. Phlake, there you are, where are your actors?

SYLLA PHLAKE

We are all actors, Turner Bachman...all actors on the great big stage of life! Now sing with me....Greased lightning! Go greased lightning!

(MS. PHLAKE dances off.)

MS. SPELLING

What fun!

TURNER BACHMAN

Do you enjoy teaching English Ms. Spelling

BELINDA SPELLING

It's rather depressing...There is perhaps one student in a thousand who can write well.

TURNER BACHMAN

What about those splendid guest articles written by students in the local newspapers?

BELINDA SPELLING

Their teachers do extreme makeovers of the articles before they are submitted for publication.

TURNER BACHMAN

Speaking of extreme, I'd better see if Ms. Phlake and her cast have turned up in the theatre.

SEÑOR SANCHEZ

Speaking of makeovers, I think he needs a vacation.

(MR. BACHMAN exits. Ms. WRITEWELL and MS. SPELLING exit. TYRONE STRONG makes an announcement.)

TYRONE STRONG

There will be a brief but important meeting in the staffroom. A brief but important meeting for all staff in the staffroom. Right away, please.

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 9:

(TERRY SHORTZ and CLAY SLABOWSKI enter.)

TERRY SHORTZ

Damn staff meeting. Now I won't have time to shower before A Block.

(TERRY jogging on the spot.)

CLAY SLABOWSKI

(shouting)

Morning, Mr. Doof!

EDWARD DOOF

Eh?

TERRY SHORTZ

(doing scissor-jumps)

I'm pumped. Really pumped.

CLAY SLABOWSKI

Pumped?

TERRY SHORTZ

(still doing scissor jumps.)

I got a date with the drama teacher.

CLAY SLABOWSKI

Ms. Phlake?

TERRY SHORTZ

(doing stretches)

Yeah. She's hot. You don't think she's hot?

CLAY SLABOWSKI

(agitated)

I do not think teachers should speak about each other like that.

TERRY SHORTZ

(finally stopping)

I'm a teacher, but I'm a single man, too. And Sylla Phlake's a single woman.

(ROLAND RANTZ enters.)

ROLAND RANTZ

Damn staff meeting. Had to stop my socials meeting just as we were getting started. LATE!

CLAY SLABOWSKI

How unfortunate, Mr. Rantz.

ROLAND RANTZ

The socials department used to be all men. Now there's a woman and nothing starts on time.

TERRY SHORTZ

But you got to admit, she's a pretty little thing.

CLAY SLABOWSKI

Terry! It's not right to talk of any woman like she is an object!

ROLAND RANTZ

In the old days, we could hang out in the socials office, belching and scratching our private parts and talking about sports. Not any more.

TERRY SHORTZ

Come on down to the physed office anytime, Roland. Sometimes the only thing that can revive a man's spirits is the smell of stale sweat.

ROLAND RANTZ

And she contradicts me constantly. If I say Soviet industrialization saved the Russians from the Nazis, she says Stalin was a butcher, and the Russians would have been better off with Trotsky.

TERRY SHORTZ

I don't know what the hell you're talking about, big fella.

CLAY SLABOWSKI

I am from Ukraine. Stalin killed millions in the Great Famine.

TERRY SHORTZ

Jeeze, what is this, a history seminar? That was then, this is now.

(TYRONE STRONG makes an announcement.)

TYRONE STRONG

Staff meeting, right away, please. Staff meeting, right now!

(MOLLY MOPPET and PHYLLIS BUCKET enter and cross.)

MOLLY MOPPET

The sprinklers in the gym have gone off.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

Time to put on the hip waders.

(MOLLY and PHYLLIS exit.)

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 10:

(ALICE FILER and WYNONA HUFFLE enter, carrying the evacuation plan folders.)

ALICE FILER

Well, looky here. It's the boys' club.

WYNONA HUFFLE

Hello, Mr. Doof!

DOOF

Huh?

WYNONA

Hello!

ALICE

She said hello Edward!

(MADAME L'IMPARFAIT enters, in beret and with cigarette.)

MADAME

Bonjour tout le monde. What eez thees about a staff meeting?

EDWARD DOOF

(does the laugh from Little Mermaid)

MADAME

Franchement Monsieur. I do not sound like zat.

ALICE FILER

There is still no smoking on school property Madame L'Imparfait.

MADAME

Discrimination.

SENOR SANCHEZ

Marlise we need to finalize details about our trip...

ALICE

What's this?

SENOR

We are going to take 25 students on tour to Spain and France next spring break.

MADAME

25?! I thought you said 5! 5 students! Oh no impossible...(they argue away from the group.)

ALICE.

You look sweaty, Mr. Shortz.

TERRY SHORTZ

As do you, Mrs. Filer, as do you.

WYNONA HUFFLE

Mr. Rantz - Did you find Ms. Roamer?

ALICE FILER

You darn near wrecked the P.A. system hollering into it like that, Mr. Rantz.

ROLAND RANTZ

That damn P.A.'s too flimsy. If they'd build schools in a masculine way, things wouldn't break so easily.

ALICE FILER

This school is an equal opportunity place Mr. Rantz, whether you like it or not.  
(Senor and Madame are now on opposite sides of the room)

CLAY SLABOWSKI

The system would be even better with more women in charge.

MADAME

Bravo, bravo.

SENOR SANCHEZ

Alice, are you interested in being a chaperone on our school tour to Spain and France?

ALICE FILER

I can't go anywhere. The school would fall apart during my absence.  
Mr. Shortz, you still owe twenty-five bucks for the Sunshine Fund.

TERRY SHORTZ

I paid already.

CLAY SLABOWSKI

Is for good cause, Terry.

WYNONA HUFFLE

Everyone pays, Mr. Shortz.

TERRY SHORTZ

Tomorrow.

(Mr. SOPHTO and LINDA NERE enter.)

SCOTTIE SOPHTO

Did you pay your twenty-five dollars for the Sunshine Fund, Mr. Shortz?

LINDA NERE

You're the only one who hasn't.

TERRY SHORTZ

(shouting)

Tomorrow!

ALICE FILER

Ms. Nere, Bobby Grabstock's mother is coming in to see you. She sounded upset.

SENOR SANCHEZ

Uh oh. Groper-boy's big mean school board mama's gunning for you, Ms. Nere.

Pew pew!

LINDA NERE

Oh, god.

SENOR SANCHEZ

(to Linda)

If I was you, I'd go home sick until she cools off.

(RONNIE DIDJIT enters.)

WYNONA HUFFLE

Ms. Didjit, there's a package for you on the counter in the office.

RONNIE DIDJIT

Oh, good. My class set of abacii must have arrived!

MADAME

Don't you mean "abacusses"?

RONNIE DIDJIT

One abacus....two abacii.

(BETTY PLANER and SAMMY HOMAKER enter.)

ALICE FILER

Ms. Planer, you need to fill out an accident report about the boy who broke his fingernail last week.

SAMMY HOMAKER

That was just a fingernail!

ALICE FILER

And the accident report is just a piece of paper.

(BETTY PLANER reddens with fury.)

MR. SOPHTO

Betty, I know you're upset, but endless forms and reports are essential to the smooth functioning of a modern high school.

(Everyone is wary of BETTY PLANER, who appears about to explode.)

LINDA NERE

(as people back away)

Try to stay calm, Betty. Remember the breathing exercises I taught you.

(BETTY takes in air and puffs it out audibly, like a woman doing breath exercises prior to giving birth.)

Mr. SOPHTO

That's the way, Ben. In and out. In and out. Good, strong puffs, cleaning your system.

(Much to the alarm of everyone, BETTY puffs faster and faster until she collapses.)

CLAY

Get her to a chair! I am first aid!

(CLAY SLABOWSKI and SAMMY HOMAKER haul BETTY to a chair, where she slumps.)

SAMMY

She'll be okay give her space...

ALICE FILER

Mr. Homaker, there's been a complaint from a parent. Her daughter brought home a muffin from your foods class.

MR. HOMAKER

They're allowed to take their baking home, Alice.

ALICE FILER

The girl's mother is a chemist. She did an analysis and determined that five percent of the muffin was mouse droppings.

MR. HOMAKER

Aw man, I've tried so hard to keep it to three percent or less. I really tried.

(TURNER BACHMAN enters.)

LINDA NERE

Mr. Bachman, bad news. The band's Disney trip's been cancelled.

TURNER BACHMAN

Cancelled? Why?

MR. SOPHTO

The CIA claims your Uncle Jim is a terrorist. They won't let him chaperone or billet the group.

TURNER BACHMAN

My uncle Jim? He's not a terrorist. He's a therapist. They must have read it wrong!

MR. SOPHTO

Americans aren't much for reading.

(BELINDA SPELLING and PAM WRITEWELL enter.)

BELINDA SPELLING

Hail, hail, the gang's all here!

MS. WRITEWELL

I love surprise staff meetings!

MADAME

You never know what sort of dramatic things will be revealed!

TURNER BACHMAN

Strikes...

SEÑOR SANCHEZ

Outbreaks of disease...

MADAME

Nervous breakdowns...

BELINDA SPELLING

Resignations...

MADAME

Criminal investigations...

BELINDA SPELLING

How dull life would be without surprise staff meetings!

(GINA ROAMER enters.)

GINA ROAMER

Mr. Rantz! I'm sorry I was late for the socials meeting.

ROLAND RANTZ

Don't let it happen again, Ms. Roamer.

LINDA NERE

Roland, do you want to talk sometime about how you're doing?

ROLAND RANTZ

I don't talk about my feelings!

Mr. SOPHTO

Your lower lip is trembling, Roland.

ROLAND RANTZ

It's my allergies...my allergies...

Can't we just get on with the damn meeting?

(PHYLLIS BUCKET and MOLLY MOPPET enter.)

MOLLY MOPPET

The principal here yet?

PHYLLIS BUCKET

We got a big problem in the gym.

TERRY SHORTZ

The gym?

MOLLY MOPPET

The sprinkler system activated.

PHYLLIS BUCKET

She's filling up like a swimming pool.

MOLLY MOPPET

The rugby team's treading water.

CLAY SLABOWSKI

Do not worry. Is good exercise. Once I tread water for six days.

ALICE FILER

Staff meetings take precedence over everything! No matter what!

(Molly and Phyllis run out to deal with the flood. They'll be back.)

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 11:

(TEMERITY BLAIR and TYRONE STRONG enter. Immediately everyone starts talking to each other.)

TYRONE STRONG

All right, all right, settle down and listen up!

Listen up! ATTENTION PLEASE!

SHUTTTTTT UPPPPPPPPP!

(They finally stop and SYLLA PHLAKE enters.)

SYLLA PHLAKE

Oh, I hope I haven't missed anything. I was outside picking flowers.

TEMERITY BLAIR

Those flowers are the property of School District 21, Ms. Phlake.

SYLLA PHLAKE

No one owns flowers, Ms. Blair. They belong to nature.

TEMERITY BLAIR

Over at Mudhen Secondary, a kid got expelled for pulling up flowers.

SYLLA PHLAKE

I don't "pull them up", I snip them off and place them in a vase for the enjoyment of my lovely students! We put them in the middle of the drama circle and meditate for hours!

TURNER BACHMAN

Is that why your actors are so under-rehearsed, Ms. Phlake?

SYLLA PHLAKE

Silly man! My actors learn by osmosis. They ABSORB their roles.

TURNER BACHMAN

Absorb?

SYLLA PHLAKE

I get the scripts printed on bedsheets, and the actors sleep with their words wrapped around them!

TYRONE STRONG

We really must get started.

TEMERITY BLAIR

(beginning a long speech that causes the staff to become glazed-over and catatonic)

Thank you, Mr. Strong. Now, we don't want to keep you from your classes, so I'll cut straight to the chase. Educational research has shown that effective schools have staffs who engage in collaborative efforts to raise the standards of academic achievement. That's not to say we are not collaborative, however much work remains to be done in the sense that work is being done on a daily basis so that we have gotten closer to our agreed-upon goals of last year's committee's recommendations forwarded to the staff, as you may recall, for ratification after reviewing the wording. There may have been some wording that stood out as redundant and I'll take responsibility for that if you bear with me for just a few more moments, the final efforts are to be commended, thanks to Bob and Sally who worked long and hard....

TYRONE STRONG

Ms. Blair...

TEMERITY BLAIR

...on the substance of the report. If we tend to drift in our efforts, that's foreseeable, and correctible, though some months may pass slowly before answers are apparent. I think we all know that knowing is exceptional except in some instances...

TYRONE STRONG

(raising his voice a notch or two)

Ms. Blair!

TEMERITY BLAIR

...within our grasp with no time for an overhead and I apologize though the main points are made, I think, if you recall the thrust of the initiative, and the figures indicate a positive trend throughout the spectrum...now at more than 2.3 percent, I think, if memory serves...the middle way is best, in these matters...

TYRONE STRONG

Temerity!

(She finally stops.)

TEMERITY BLAIR

Yes, Mr. Strong?

TYRONE STRONG

The staff, Temerity...they're catatonic!

(The entire staff is frozen, like zombies.)

TEMERITY BLAIR

I tried to keep it brief.

TYRONE STRONG

That was the briefest speech I've ever heard a principal make to a staff.

TEMERITY BLAIR

Then why are they catatonic?

TYRONE STRONG

I think, after years of listening to principals at staff meetings, they've finally had all they can take.

TEMERITY BLAIR

All they can take?

TYRONE STRONG

They've shut down completely, like circuit breakers popping after an electrical overload.

TEMERITY BLAIR

How will we revive them?

TYRONE STRONG

The only way a school staff can be revived.

TEMERITY BLAIR

You don't mean...?

TYRONE STRONG

Yes.

TEMERITY BLAIR

All right....I'll do it!

TEMERITY BLAIR AND TYRONE STRONG

(shouting loudly)

Free Krispy-Kreme Donuts and Starbucks coffee for everyone!

(All the staff, except EDWARD DOOF, revive instantly, leaping up and looking around for the donuts and coffee.)

TYRONE STRONG

All right, now you're awake again, we'll tell you why you're here.

(The staff sits, disappointed they've been conned. They don't yet notice Mr. Doof.)

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 12:

TEMERITY BLAIR

Ms. Filer will give you a folder outlining evacuation plans in the event of toxic fumes spewing from the ventilation system.

LINDA

Do we finally get the gas masks?

(ALICE FILER and WYNONA HUFFLE hand out the folders, which the staff open and read.)

TEMERITY BLAIR

Any questions? Señor Sanchez?

SEÑOR

Are the kids supposed to go home after we evacuate?

TEMERITY BLAIR

No, they are to stay on school property.

MADAME

But not in zee building with zee nasty fumes?

BETTY PLANER

The building is “property” isn’t it? And it’s a “school”, so it’s school property.

SAMMY HOMAKER

What part of the school property are the kids supposed to stay on?

TEMERITY BLAIR

The field. The field’s the only school property they can stay on.

TURNER BACHMAN

If the field’s not school property, the kids might not stay on it.

TEMERITY BLAIR

They’ll stay on it if you tell them it’s school property when there’s an emergency.

Mr. Bachman?

TURNER BACHMAN

Perhaps it would be best if the students stayed on the parking lot, which is school property.

MRS FILER

The parking lot is not a large enough section of school property, Mr. Bachman, so they will have to go to the city’s field, which will be called “school property” for our purposes. Ms. Phlake?

SYLLA PHLAKE

Must we use the term “property”? It sounds so capitalist.

ALICE FILER

It’s necessary to call it something everyone can understand. Ms. Spelling?

BELINDA SPELLING

If the field is only school property in an emergency, what is it in a drill that’s not a real emergency? Is it a metaphor?

CLAY SLABOWSKI

It’s the city’s property, but we use it for sports, so we can use it for drills.

BETTY PLANER

I have a class set of drills.

BACHMAN TURNER

Do we tell the kids that the field is school property or city property?

TEMERITY BLAIR

You just tell them to go out on the field. If one of them asks if its school property, tell them to see me about it. Ms. Nere?

LINDA NERE

The students will be standing in their shoes and socks, which are their own property....

SCOTTIE SOPHTO

...so should we tell them to take their shoes and socks off so they will be standing on city property that we are calling school property in an emergency instead of standing on their own property?

(There is some applause for this clever outburst.)

TYRONE

Oh dear.

MS. SPELLING

It’s conceivable that a student could take two school garbage bags, pull a bag onto each leg, secure the bags with twist-ties, and scamper off...

SENR

...secure in the knowledge that they are standing on school property no matter where they are.

(There is much applause for this brilliant conjecture.)

SAMMY HOMAKER

If I see a boy running away in a pair of garbage bags...

TERRY SHORTZ

I will personally tackle him and yank the damn things off his legs myself, all right?

MADAME

Bravo!

(shouting...MOLLY AND PHYLLIS RETURN. But some have noticed Mr. Doof. All become concerned. They approach carefully and then shake him awake.)

TEMERITY

Mr. Doof? (full of worry)

RONNIE

Mr. Doof? Oh no no no! Edward?!!!

EDWARD DOOF

Ms. Blair, I wonder if you'd be willing to iron my shirts and pants for me this evening. I no longer have sufficient dexterity to manipulate hand-held appliances.

RONNIE

Oh thank goodness gracious.

TEMERITY BLAIR

(shouting)

Perhaps you could hire a student!

EDWARD DOOF

A novel idea!

ALICE

Did you get that in the meeting minutes?

WYNONA HUFFLE

(who has been taking notes)

Did Mr. Doof say “shirts” or “skirts”?

ALICE

Shirts. Anything further?

MOLLY MOPPET

Mr. Doof could get trampled in an evacuation.

RONNIE DIDJIT

A rope and pulley system has been installed in Mr. Doof’s science lab. He will be pushed through the window and lowered to the ground. In case of a drill, a metaphoric emergency, we can simply pulley him back into his teaching station.

(golf claps)

PHYLLIS

That’s.. innovative.

*Staffroom by Richard Stuart Dixon, Good School Plays.*

Scene 13:

ROLAND RANTZ

I move the meeting be adjourned.

TEMERITY BLAIR

This is a staff meeting, Mr. Rantz, not a union meeting. You can’t move for adjournment.

TERRY SHORTZ

Is this meeting breaking the union contract?!

SYLLA PHLAKE

I move we hold a wildcat STRIKE!

BETTY PLANER

I second the motion!

MADAME

I love protest! Tout le monde: Vive La Revolution!

TERRY SHORTZ

Madame L'Imparfait hold on to your tutu for one sec: Let's do this properly.

SENOR SANCHEZ

All those in favour?

(PLANER, RANTZ, PHLAKE, SPELLING, WRITEWELL, SENOR, MADAME, PHYLLIS raise their arms.)

ROLAND RANTZ

That's eight. Those against?

(HOMAKER, TURNER BACHMAN, ALICE FILER, WYNONA HUFFLE, RONNIE, DOOF and MOLLY MOPPET, SLABOWSKI raise their arms.)

RONNIE DIDGIT

That's eight...a tie.

MOLLY, TURNER, ALICE, WYNONA, RONNIE, DOOF, HOMAKER

(Pirate sounds)

PLANER, RANTZ, PHLAKE, SPELLING, WRITEWELL, BUCKET, SENOR, MADAME, SLABOWSKI:

Strike! Strike! Strike!

TEMERITY BLAIR

Please, please! This is ridiculous! All we wanted to do was hand out a few folders and send you back to your classes!

TURNER BACHMAN

You union militants can't push the rest of us around! The kids come first!

PHYLLIS BUCKET

It was a tie vote anyway. Let's just let it go.

SYLLA PHLAKE

Some of you didn't vote! Gina Roamer didn't vote!

GINA ROAMER

I don't have to vote!

TURNER BACHMAN

She doesn't have to vote!

ROLAND RANTZ

Ms. Roamer, I demand that you vote!

CLAY SLABOWSKI

Do not bully her, Mr. Rantz, or I will crush you like a bug!

ROLAND RANTZ

Stay out of my face, jockstrap!

(RANTZ and SLABOWSKI begin to tussle. PLANER and SHORTZ pull them apart.)

ROLAND RANTZ

It's just so difficult...with her...in the socials office....

her perfume...her hair...

Ms. Roamer! Your eyes....your voice...the way you...move....

GINA ROAMER

Every day! Mr. Rantz!

I see the way you sit at your computer, so strong and determined...the way you yank open your file cabinet and pull out lesson plans from ten years ago...the way you curse in your manly voice while you mark student essays...oh,

Roland...

ROLAND RANTZ

Gina...

GINA ROAMER

Yes, Roland...

ROLAND RANTZ

I...I love you, Gina...I've loved you for such a very long, long time...

GINA ROAMER

You have? Oh, Roland....

ROLAND RANTZ

Gina...Gina...marry me! Marry me, and make me the happiest socials teacher in the world!

GINA ROAMER

(throwing herself into ROLAND'S arms)

Oh, yes, Roland, yes...a thousand times yes!

(The stunned onlookers, perplexed and awestruck by this unlikely display of romantic affection, slowly burst into applause that builds into cheers that builds into a sort of wild version of the chicken dance that ends with everyone collapsing everywhere, except EDWARD DOOF, who staggers to his feet and lurches forward so he is the centre of attention. He sings to the audience like an old vaudevillian trouper, shuffling his feet in a sort of tap dance.)

EDWARD DOOF

They're getting married in the morning!

Ding dong! The bells are gonna chime.

Pull out the stopper!

Let's have a whopper!

But get me to the church on time!

(The cast assembles into a dance troupe and begin to dance as ROLAND RANTZ sings.)

ROLAND RANTZ

I gotta be there in the mornin'

Spruced up and lookin' in my prime.

Girls, come and kiss me;

Show how you'll miss me.

But get me to the church on time!

(GINA ROAMER takes over, belting out the next verse.)

GINA ROAMER

I'm gettin' married in the mornin'

Ding dong! the bells are gonna chime.

Kick up a rumpus

But don't lose the compass;

And get me to the church on time!

(In a grand finale, the whole cast dances and sings the final two verses.)

REST OF CAST

They're getting married in the morning

Ding dong! the bells are gonna chime.

Drug me or jail me,

Stamp me and mail me.

But get me to the church on time!

They're gettin' married in the mornin'

Ding dong! the bells are gonna chime...

Hail and salute me

Then haul off and boot me...

And get me to the church,

Get me to the church...

Get me to the church on time!

TEMERITY BLAIR

This staff meeting is over. Off to your classes. The kids are waiting!

(As the music to the "Chicken Dance" plays, the cast take their bows.)

END OF PLAY.