

Career Day: Dancing for Jesus

The fourth grade children boomed volumes as I came into the classroom. I was fifteen minutes late with messenger bags fused to my body because of two reasons: I dropped my kids off to school while traffic slugged at a snail's pace and as soon as I entered the school building, I completely forgot to print papers out for my other kids. Yeah, I work at the school my kids go to and these fourth grade rascals were my other kids because I was their teacher. They looked at me with pointy eyes as I came. I put my bags on the desk and stared at them back. These kids always made me nervous and today was just another battle.

"Hey Mr. Wolf!" The children shouted and became quiet. Believe it or not, they did this all the time. They made it their dedication to greet me as synchronized as possible. I still don't know if they did this to mess with me or please me.

"What happened to you?" Timmy said. His afro matched my mood: messy and disorganized.

"Life happened." I said as I tried to get the one-thousand pages of worksheets off of my bag. This was not my day and if I could, I would take a drink

Alpha Cotay
3/24/15
Laugh Contest

in front of them. "You know when you have to do something and then you forget something and you have to waste time to make up for what you forgot?"

"I know what you mean, Mr. Wolf." Ron said, the slacker of the class. His eyes widened as he grabbed his head. "Shoot, I forgot to do the homework! Wait, did we even have homework?" He looked around the class and every student nodded. Some snickered at him.

"Of course you did." I shook my head as I stood in front of the class. "You never do homework. Heck, who even did the homework?" Only two people raised their hands. Not a surprise. "And you guys laugh at Ron?" I sighed. "Why do you all even come to school? You're wasting your life if you don't do anything but sit. Every tax-paying person contributes to your free education and here you are blowing it. Do you know how much we have to sacrifice to make American children learn? No, you don't."

Silence filled the room as my frustration became aggravated. I hated when kids like Ron come into school and don't try. Of course, Ron isn't the only person, but I don't care if I single him out. All the Rons could burn in a fire for all I care because most of the Rons I taught were complete slackers. Thank the lord my mom named me John. A close call for sure.

Alpha Cotay
3/24/15
Laugh Contest

Michelle rose her hand and I acknowledged her while I leaned on the front desk. "Are we going to learn more about math, Mr. Wolf?"

"Math can wait. We can talk about something else, something relevant. My kids and I were talking about it when I dropped them off. Dreams. All of you have them, right?" The kids nodded. "They're important to have because they give you motivation to try. And apparently, only Max and Jenna have that."

"That's mean, Mr. Wolf!" Sandra said, defending herself and the majority of slackers. Her curly hair went all over the place every time she moved her head.

"Everybody has a dream."

"Exactly. I have a dream!" Ron did his best shit-eating grin.

"Oh really? Then, why aren't you applying yourself?" I said. Ron was about to say something before I cut him off. "You know what, for curiosity sake, what is your dream, Ron?"

"I wanna be a wrestler!" Ron put his fist in the air. "The best of the best!"

"A wrestler?" I stared at him. Body slams, boots to asses, slaps, and low blows came to mind when I watched wrestling with my son. "What makes you think

Alpha Cotay
3/24/15
Laugh Contest

you'll be a superstar? They work pretty damn hard to maintain their body and performance."

"I'm strong. See these guns?!" Ron rolled his sleeve and flexed his right arm. His muscles were chicken wings. "I've been practicing fighting with my brothers and my cousins. And I always win! Always need to protect yourself, right Mr. Wolf?"

I chuckled and took a swig of my water bottle. "Like I said before, acting." I coughed. "Wrestling, is a lot of practice and work. You're telling me you want to be a wrestler and you can't remember simple tasks when I ask you to do them?"

"But wrestling is more fun than this! You get millions of dollars and you get the ladies!" Ron complained as some girls in the classroom darted his eyes at him. "Heck, Mr. Wolf I even made a finishing move called the Ball Stomper. Works every time. See, what you do is—"

"Already invented." I glared at him. "A dirty move too. Good luck pulling that off and not getting fired." I scanned the faces of the class. "What else, what other dreams you guys have?"

Michelle raised her hand. "I wanna be a bartender."

Alpha Cotay
3/24/15
Laugh Contest

"Really?" I said as she nodded. "Interesting position. Didn't expect you guys to have that on your radar. How come, Michelle?"

"Well, I heard my dad and grandpa say that they have a good time drinking. So one time, my grandpa and dad asked me to help them get drinks for mixing. So I figured, why not make drinks for them? And it turns out I'm good with mixing drinks."

My head lurched back and I stared at her. I contemplated whether to call child protective services or trust Michelle's dad or grandpa. "Uhh, Michelle? What drinks did you mix?"

"You know, like apple juice, orange juice, grape juice, soda. All sorts of stuff. I did that with my dad and grandpa and they said they felt good and *buzzed* from my mixing. Whatever that means."

I snickered. She didn't know what her irresponsible family members were actually drinking. But, to test this theory... "Hey Michelle, do you know what alcohol is?"

She nodded her head. "Yeah I do. It's the stuff I made from mixing, right?"

Hypothesis proven.

Alpha Cotay
3/24/15
Laugh Contest

I could encourage her to follow her dreams as a bartender so she could hopefully remember me and give me a discount on alcohol. But, I had to set an example from my children. "A word of advice: stay away from alcohol. Stay as far away as you can until you're twenty-one. And if your dad and grandpa ever allow you to drink with them, call the cops."

Michelle's eyes widened. "Why?! Is something wrong?!"

"Just listen to me." I said. "Unless if you want to get into trouble. You gotta be twenty one thanks to the twenty-first amendment. Remember that. That's how I remembered the twenty-first amendment." I noticed blank faces unsurprisingly. "You'll learn about that later. Anyway." I pointed at Sandra. "What about you?"

"Ohhh. I wanna be a dancer!" Sandra said.

"Interesting. My wife is a professional dancer. Why do you want to be a dancer?" I drank my water bottle.

"So I can dance for Jesus."

Water shot from my mouth. My nose was on fire. Never in my life did I laugh so hard. I imagined an older Sandra giving a lap dance for Jesus and Jesus loving every minute of it, throwing that sacred money, splashing that holy water on

Alpha Cotay
3/24/15
Laugh Contest

Sandra, and saying "Hallelujah!" Man, I have a twisted mind, but I couldn't stop laughing. I almost died as I held the desk for dear life.

"What's so funny, Mr. Wolf?" Sandra said. Tears streamed from her eyes.

"Why—why are you making fun of me?"

"No—I'm—" I had no breath left. "Holy shit!"

"Ohhh! Mr. Wolf cursed!" Timmy pointed at me as other students did the same thing.

"I hate you Mr. Wolf!" Sandra screamed. "I'll tell Jesus you won't be saved!" She ran out of the classroom as I laughed some more. My reaction didn't come from atheism. Instead, it was because of how Sandra interpreted religion. I feel sorry for her family for indoctrinating her like that.

I tried to compose myself as the students stared at me. The atmosphere made me a bit uncomfortable. "Sorry about that. Cursed a little bit. You didn't hear that, okay?"

"Oh we heard it Mr. Wolf." Ron grinned.

"I hope she's okay." Michelle stared at the door.

Alpha Cotay
3/24/15
Laugh Contest

"She'll be fine. I'll talk to her in a minute." I said as I chuckled a bit. I looked at the ceiling. "Oh man. Dancing for Jesus? I can't make this up."

"What are your son and daughter's dreams, Mr. Wolf?" Timmy said.

I looked at him with a smile on my face. "Good question, Timmy. My son wants to be a doctor while my daughter wants to be a lawyer."

"Those sound like boring jobs." Ron said. "Too much work."

"Definitely." Michelle said. "Isn't that a lot of school?"

"It is, but it's worth it. And it's certainly not the type of school you guys are in. It's extremely different, more fun depending on how you make it." I shrugged.

"Takes a while to get there, but when you have passion like they do, you'll do anything."

"Still boring jobs." Ron said. "Stupid too."

"Careers." I corrected. "And they're not boring or stupid."

"More fun than a demolition expert?!" Timmy said.

"Or a boxer?" Jenna said.

"Or a construction worker?" Max said.

Alpha Cotay
3/24/15
Laugh Contest

I blinked. "Huh? Well, it depends—"

The students started talking about their dreams and how boring the lives of doctors and lawyers were. Too much work, too much school, too much money, too much effort. All the professional careers were "stupid" to them while the zany, out-of-this world jobs were highly praised. As these kids talked, I couldn't help but think one question: What the hell is wrong with this generation?