

## A Day in the Life

It was lunch time, and some of us were sitting in the staffroom just talking. This by itself was unusual; we almost never sat in the staffroom ... but it had been a long, tiresome week.

Kate was telling us about the dog she and Darren had purchased. "It's a Chihuahua, and it's so cute!" She gushed. "We got that kind because it's hairless, and it doesn't bother my allergies. At least, not much." She sneezed.

"What did you call him?"

"Darren wanted to call him 'Cojones', but I wouldn't let him."

"Cojones? What's it mean? I don't get it." That was Bonnie.

"Well," Kate continued, "For such a small dog, its ... uh ... *cojones* ... are rather large."

"Oh!" Bonnie blushed.

"But we eventually agreed on 'Taco'.

"Oh, that's so cute" Val interjected. "Can we see him?"

"We'll bring him over one day next week. Right now he's at the vet having his ... *cojones* ... deactivated."

"So what's everyone doing this weekend?"

"Well," Mindy volunteered, "We're taking our horses in to town tomorrow for dressing ..."

"You mean, like, *dressage*?"

"No, dressing! We're getting them all some clothing. You know, shirts, hats, pants ..."

"How ...?"

"It's custom fitted. We're getting their names embroidered on everything too. And the pants are so cool ... they have this flap in the back ..."

Val changed the subject.

"Where is Bill anyway?"

Bonnie pointed out the window. "Have a look."

Everyone went to the window to see. Bill was in the field running around in circles, waving his arms in the air.

“What on earth ...?”

“He was out checking for our missing Jr. High boys. Apparently there’s a small wasp nest out there somewhere. He thinks they’re attacking him.”

“I’ve never seen him move so fast. At least, not since Mindy’s class volunteered to wash his new car ...”

“Somebody should go out and help him ...”

“Nah! He needs the exercise.”

“Did he ever tell you his ‘wasp in the ceiling’ story?”

“Uh ... no.”

“Several summers ago he came back to discover a large wasp nest in the ceiling over his kitchen. So he went to town and bought four large cans of wasp spray, and ...”

“How did he ...”

“He stayed up until five in the morning, and then emptied all four cans into the ceiling through small holes he’d made.”

“Did it ...”

“Kill them? Well, eventually. But mostly they just scattered throughout the house ... above the ceilings. There were wasps buzzing in the roof everywhere. Even over the bathroom”

“Oh oh!”

“Yeah. He had to sleep in the staffroom for three days until they all died!”

“Say, Bonnie, how is that new CTS course of yours going?”

“You mean ‘Taxidermy 3110’? It’s going great!”

“Taxidermy?? You mean, like stuffing dead animals ...?”

“Yeah! The textbook suggested we use squirrels or rabbits, but we started with mice ...”  
Bonnie seemed quite pleased. “There’s lots of mice around.”

“What?!”

Mindy interrupted: “I guess that would explain the smell ...”

“You’re stuffing mice? Here?” That was Kate. She isn’t too fond of mice. She keeps a tall stool in her room for mouse emergencies.

“In the staffroom, yeah. There wasn’t any other classroom available.”

“Where ...?”

“In the fridge over there. You know those white Tupperware containers ...”

“Arrggh!” Kate got up and hurried towards the door. But as she was leaving she yelled “I think we’ll just keep Taco at home, if you don’t mind!”

“She’s really sensitive, isn’t she!” Bonnie looked hurt. But she brightened. “Mindy, would you like a stuffed mouse for your desk? They make great paperweights! I sent Brooke three of them!”

Towards the end of the day, Mindy and Bonnie were supervising a class in the computer room. They could see Bill out in the parking lot. Apparently he was still looking for those missing students. He was occasionally waving a hand around in the air, swatting at imaginary wasps.

Bonnie said “How do you think Darren is doing as our new Principal?” It was a constant topic of conversation among the staff.

“Well, he certainly seems a lot more mellow. I think having a dog did him a lot of good!”

“I don’t think it’s that. I think it’s the paint in his office!”

In a bid to cheer Darren up earlier in the month, Bonnie had elected to paint Darren’s office. He now had the only totally pink Principal’s office in the School Division. It also had some cute little cartoon characters here and there on the walls. Jessie had done that.

“What do you mean? I thought he hated it!” Mindy said.

“Well, maybe. But I’ve been doing some research. Apparently pink is a very soothing colour. Prisons use it in rooms where they need to temporarily hold violent prisoners. It’s supposed to calm them down.”

“I guess that might help with the Jr. High boys that are in there regularly ...”

“I think it’s helped Darren too. He hardly ever yells at me any more.”

“Well, you have to admit, the new coffee cup you bought him did make him a little irate ...”

“How did I know it was a dribble cup?! The package didn’t say it was a joke cup!”

“I know. But he had to wear an apron all morning because of the big wet stain on his pants.”

Just then Bill came in. “Did you get stung?” That was Mindy.

“No, thank heavens. But they’re little killers. They chased me around out there for half the afternoon. And I never did find those boys.”

Bill paid a student \$250 every summer to keep his grass cut and to deal with any wasps that might try to make nests near his house. We were sure the grass payment was \$50, and all the rest was for wasp duty. But Michelle hadn’t complained. And as far as we knew, she’d never even seen a wasp.

“Well,” Mindy said tiredly, “I think it’s about time to go home. We still have to give all the horses a bath and clean their teeth...”

No-one wanted her to elaborate on that.