

Occupy Eric.

Adams – (17) is convinced his brains entitle him with the right to lord over everyone. He doesn't need teaching, hell he's a teacher.

Grahams – (17) but less sure of his place in the world, he is ready to follow the lead of whoever is taking the class.

Morrison – (17) and doesn't need teachers as he knows everything there ever needs to be known. Who needs to go to school when you will one day own it?

Eric – (37) is a teacher of much experience, much ingenuity and much patience.

A one-man blue tent is pitched on the edge of a small town Occupy camp. The zip has been padlocked shut from the outside. In front a pair of dirty Birkenstocks and a pile of clothes; to the side an upturned milk crate topped with a newspaper and a steaming mug of tea. Other crates are scattered and there is a sign proclaiming 'Occupy School.'

The tent moves; someone is trapped inside it.

Adams and Grahams, both in school uniform enter, Grahams kicks the school sign over. The tent stops moving.

Adams: No teacher. No students. No school.

Grahams: What's it Morrison says? There is education awaiting all who we encounter.

Adams: Ah, but this isn't just about education Grahams. This is about the man in the tent; the every man who gets too big for his sandals and outgrows societal norms.

Grahams: What, that tent?

He points to the tent.

Adams: No, not that tent! Show me any space left in the world I'll show you a filthy-grubby-left-wing-good-for-nothing-scumbag-junky-squatter "occupying" it. Now, how about you do something useful? Bring some order to this classroom?

Grahams: Yes, boss.

Adams: I feel Sir will suffice in the current context.

Grahams organises the milk crates. Adams continues his lecture.

I am not sure you fully comprehend the extent of the assault on our way of life by this man in a tent.

Grahams: What man in a tent?

Adams: Sir.

Grahams: Sir. I mean there's no one else here, he left his –

Adams: – Take a seat, Grahams. This is a symptom of what is so wrong with contemporary society.

Grahams slumps on a crate.

Grahams: Isn't that the point of all the tents? Sir.

Adams: It is not the point of all the tents. Grahams. Tell me, what would you say to this man?

Grahams: Er... Hello?

Adams: (*Snort*) Exactly. Now let us turn to this little set up. What do you see?

Adams gestures towards the newspaper and the tea.

It is *The Guardian*. And if you look at the crossword it will be two thirds completed in black biro. No commitment to finishing.

Grahams: What? The crossword?

Adams: The man who owns this paper might not have a tent that is directly blocking access to a cathedral but he remains a threat to the history of Empire as sure as if he erected his syphilitic canvas on the steps of St. Paul's itself. And we can tell this Grahams, by these two objects. We know this man from what he leaves behind.

Grahams: Because he doesn't finish the crossword.

Adams: Yes. And because he leaves his tea.

Adams snatches up the mug and the paper to use as props in his performance.

Grahams: What about the tent? Sir.

The tent moves, Adams doesn't notice but Grahams realises that someone must be inside it. Adams becomes more caught up in his own importance, preaching.

Adams: It is the objects that this flea leaves us that conjure up the putrefying dreadlocks that must surely frame a grimy, dirty bespectacled face.

Grahams: But –

Adams: – No buts. Look at this abandoned tea as a metaphor for the man who would leave behind society for an anarchistic life reading socialist tracts and eating lentils.

Scrabbling starts from inside the tent.

It is not the politically correct taste in editorial opinion that separates this cad from his betters. It is his tea.

With one hand Adams now raises the mug of tea above his head, conducting the air with the newspaper in the other hand Grahams inspects the tent.

Morrison enters. The others don't notice.

Morrison: Typical.

Adams: Grahams, tell me once and for all, if you saw two good students such as ourselves approaching your abode and you had only just finished pouring the finest tradition in the land, would you up and leave; would you scramble to escape the oncoming onslaught of respectability; would you? No. Would you not stay, calmly sipping on your exquisite brew and more importantly (*Pause*) would you not offer tea to your visitors?

Grahams removes a pen-knife from his pocket and slices a small opening down the right side of the tent canvas. A hand pops out through the opening. Grahams jumps back. Morrison folds his arms.

Grahams: Er.

Adams: This newspaper was confirmation of my instantaneous character assessment. He that leaves his tea always has something to hide.

Grahams makes a slit on the other side of the tent. Another hand appears.

Grahams! We must tear down the tents that obstruct the continuing progression of our nation.

With flourish Adams drains the mug of tea. Morrison advances on him and snatches the newspaper.

Morrison: You are not a good student; you never read any newspapers and you're late.

Adams splutters out his last mouthful of tea over Morrison.

And, you just drank my tea.

Grahams surrenders his knife to the tent's gesturing hand. Adams looks down.

Adams! Have you listened at all? You of all people should know how this works. Look at me! You just drank my tea from my fucking mug, you fucking mug.

Adams: Sorry, Morrison.

Morrison: You will be; fancy waltzing in like you own the place, taking the class and fucking let fly.

A loud ripping comes from the tent, feet appear from the base and it walks forward to find the Birkenstocks. A slash at the top of the tent and Eric's head appears.

Morrison: Great.

Eric has respectable hair and is now effectively wearing the tent. His arms stick straight out at right angles; only as far as his elbows and the base reaches his calves. He returns Grahams' knife.

**Adams/
Grahams:** Sir?

Eric: I don't suppose you've had a gander at number 26 down Adams, of my two thirds unfinished crossword?

Eric awkwardly bends to reach into the tent to find his glasses.

Grahams: Sir!

Adams: This is not happening.

Morrison: Oh it is. And he's gone and mucked about my big entrance. I was just getting started. Who does he think he is to come popping out of a tent like that?

Grahams: Morrison? What the hell is going on here?

Eric: Does someone mind helping me put on my glasses?

Grahams takes Eric's glasses and affixes them on Eric's nose.

Adams: Exactly. Is there any reason why old Mr. Stevens here just happens to have been conveniently zipped up and out of sight?

Grahams: Oh man, this is such a set up.

Morrison: No it isn't.

Grahams: I just sliced a teacher out of a tent!

Morrison: You shouldn't have. I dealt with the problem and then he just had to go decide to get involved.

Adams: Yeah, but he made you tea!

Morrison: How did you –

Adams: – Morrison, if that tea really was yours that I bet my own ass that you didn't make it.

Morrison: Fuck off.

Eric coughs.

Eric: I don't feel that sort of language is appropriate for my classroom.

Morrison: This is not your classroom, mate. Here you're just a fucking hippy wearing a tent.

Eric: I'm a fucking teacher wearing a tent. Sit down!

The boys automatically respond to his command.

Eric: So here we are again, back in school without an original thought between the lot of you.

Morrison, Grahams and Adams burst into schoolboy joviality.

Adams: School, Sir?

Morrison: But where are the students, Sir?

Adams: Yes the students, Sir

Grahams: We're not real students, Sir!

Adams: A school has got to have students, Sir.

Morrison: Or it isn't a school at all, Sir!

Grahams: Is it, Sir?

Eric: I'd prefer it if you called me Eric.

Morrison: You wouldn't be a proper teacher then, Sir.

Pause.

Eric: Am I a proper teacher?

Grahams: You certainly taught me all about numeracy, Sir!

Eric: Maths? Grahams, you never took in one formula.

Adams: He's precocious like that.

Morrison: Aren't we all?

Eric: Yes. All of you are politically extravagant, insolent boys. I should be forcing Occupy leaflets into your fists and watching you march off into the sunset to educate the world.

Morrison: Oh, take your leaflets and jam them tight.

Eric: So I can shit them out again?

Adams: Seriously though, Sir. Why are you here?

Eric: To escape you lot.

Morrison: Come off it. Teachers don't normally get off this way.

Eric: You want a proper answer?

Morrison: No.

Adams: Yes, Sir.

Grahams: Please, Sir.

Eric: I had thought I'd left my material life behind when I left the school. All I am is this tent. All I needed is the paper and my tea. Ha! But listening to you systematically build a picture of me and now to watch myself relapse so easily back into familiar patterns... I am not sure at all.

Adams gets to his feet mimicking Eric in his tent, doing silly poses with the milk crates.

Adams: To be honest, it says more about you that you are trying to be serious and make a point, all teacher-like, whilst wearing a tent. Look, your arms stick out all weird!

Grahams and Morrison join in Adams' fun.

Morrison: Yes! You almost had us then, Sir.

Adams: Being so serious, Sir.

Grahams: Careful, Sir!

Morrison: We'll believe anything, Sir!

Adams: You do look a bit Christ-like in that get up Sir.

Morrison: Tent Jesus, Sir.

Grahams: It's the arms, Sir!

Eric: That is enough. Sit down. Now! Listen for once.

Grahams, Adams and Morrison drop their silly poses and sit back on the crates.

Eric rolls up his tent sleeves.

Eric: Adams, you slithered in here knowing exactly where you were from, exactly who you were and exactly what you were going to be. Now you are not so sure. Are you? You spend your life judging people by their politics and your idea of normal. You want to teach them how to be normal. How does all this fit into that cup of tea?

Adams looks down at the empty mug still in his hands.

Eric: Morrison, you also know where you stand. You like to stand, don't you, Morrison, when others are sitting in front of you? But not to teach, never

to teach, for it's even better to have them lying flat with their faces knocked sideways. You like to be prepared. Which is why when I met you earlier, you stole my clothes before you locked me up in my tent. Nice. Your grandkids are going to love you, Morrison.

Morrison puts his hands in his pockets.

Eric: Then lastly there is you Grahams. Isn't there? Always last. Always, always last. It's all you know, and it's all you'll ever know unless you throw the ball back once in a while. That's why you watch though, isn't it? Notice it all.

Grahams: Yes Sir.

The boys sullenly regard Eric as he tries to sit down on a crate. He falls off it and onto the ground, his arms and legs flailing. Grahams helps him to sit up.

Eric: I know you all far too well. More than myself if I'm honest. Bloody hell. What am I doing here? Honest to God. I need a drink.

Pause. The boys exchange looks.

Adams: Morrison could make us tea.

Morrison: Fat chance.

Pause.

Grahams: So what now?

Adams: We could finish off the crossword?

Eric: Excellent suggestion boys. It may turn into a surprising pleasure to have uniformed students in this classroom after all. *Pause.* Hang on why aren't you all in school?

Adams: I think we are, Eric.