BEATING AROUND THE BUSH

By Joe Russell

Characters:

Principal, Assistant to the Principal, Maths Teacher, History Teacher, Gym Teacher and Librarian

Setting:

Faculty lounge. History Teacher, Maths Teacher and Librarian are sitting on the sofas at recess time, unwinding from their last lesson.

History Teacher:

Stop beating around the bush and just get on with it already!

Maths Teacher:

It's been three years, it's not that easy to just overcome the nerves and … well… spit it out!

History Teacher:

That's exactly why you need to just speak your truth!

Maths Teacher:

How?! Every time I come close, I get the 'Eye!'

Librarian:

The 'Eye'?

History Teacher:

Ah, you mean the thing that all the staff have grown the love and respect, the "Look!"

Librarian:

Followed by the "Hmmm?"

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History Teacher:

…and then don't forget about the "What she said?"

Librarian:

Ah yes, the always loyal companion, Mr Stevens.

Maths Teacher:

Whatever you want to call it, it's overwhelming and quite frankly my dear, I go weak at the knees.

History Teacher and Librarian laugh

Maths Teacher:

What?!

History Teacher:

Does this mean you have a thing for the Principal of the school?!

Maths Teacher:

No, not at all. She's just… just…

Librarian:

…Intimidating!

Maths Teacher:

YES! That's it! Intimidating!

Just then Gym Teacher enters the lounge, lunging as he goes. Exercising with every move he makes.

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Gym Teacher:

I wouldn't say I'm intimidating. Yes, I'm good looking, fit as an Ox and could complete 100 push-ups, three laps of the school before you can say, more tea bishop?

Librarian:

We weren't talking about you, Dan!

Lunging and exercising as he makes a cup of coffee.

Gym Teacher:

Well, who is intimidating then?

Librarian:

Well, Mr Fletcher here was just saying…

Gym Teacher stops lunging.

Gym Teacher:

Hey, why does "Mr Fletcher" get called "Mr Fletcher" and I'm just good old "Dan".

Librarian:

It's you name isn't it?

Gym Teacher:

Yes, but why does he *(pointing at Maths Teacher)* get a title and me, well I get just plain old "Dan".

History Teacher:

It's a term of endearment. That's all!

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Gym Teacher:

What's endearing about me then?

Maths Teacher:

I'm racking my brains!

Gym Teacher:

You watch it, Mr Fletcher! Or you'll see the inside of my football net!

Maths Teacher:

Intimidating.

Principal walks in followed by Assistant Principal. Stern and immediately everyone stands up, almost instinctively.

Principal:

Intimidating?! Who is?

History Teacher:

I am, Boss.

Principal:

If you say so, Miss George. Well, roll call then. How's is everyone.

Mr Fletcher?

Maths Teacher:

Erm… good.

Principal:

Miss Carey?

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Librarian:

Fine, thank you.

Principal:

Miss George?

History Teacher:

Kicking goals Boss.

Principal:

Yes, well – and, Dan?

Everyone sniggers, apart from Gym Teacher and Principal.

Gym Teacher:

Yes, fine. Thank you. *(sounding deflated)*

Principal:

Good, good.

Assistant Principal goes to pour a coffee for Principal, realising the jar is empty, looks at Principal holding the empty jar high.

Hmmm, I see we're out of coffee.

Looks around and sees that Gym Teacher is the only one with a cup of coffee in his hands.

Gym Teacher, you do know we have a strict policy for here in the Faculty Lounge. If you finish it, you replace it! Simple!

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Assistant Principal:

What she said.

Gym Teacher:

Ah, yes. Sorry.

Principal:

Miss Carey?

Librarian:

Yes, Mrs Francis.

Principal:

Did I notice that the library was closed five minutes early yesterday? Or, am I wrong. Hmmmm?

Librarian:

Yes, well. I didn't think you'd notice.

Principal:

Notice, me? - Have we met?

Librarian:

Well, Mrs Francis. You see, my father was taken ill and I had to drive him to the hospital.

Principal:

Hmmm? Isn't that what an ambulance is for! Oh well, don't let it happen again.

Assistant Principal:

What she said.

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Principal:

Mr Fletcher. Tell me, how many times does it take to get you to park in the correct parking space? Hmmmm?

Maths Teacher:

Well. I erm….

Looks at History Teacher, she nods for him to speak up.

Principal:

Yes?!

Maths Teacher:

It's just…

Principal:

Well, spit it out man!

Maths Teacher:

Erm… I mean…

Assistant Principal:

Are you okay? There doesn't seem to be anything coming out of your mouth.

Principal:

Would you please stop beating around the bush and say what it is you have to say!

Assistant Principal:

What she said.

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Maths Teacher:

I'll… I'll… (*gives up)*

Yes, Mrs Francis.

Principal:

Hmmmm? No backbone Sir. Please make sure it doesn't happen again.

Assistant Principal:

Yes, don't let it happen again.

Everyone gives Assistant Principal a look of annoyance.

Principal:

Miss George, how are we for Parents evening tonight?

History Teacher:

All set and ready to go, Mrs Francis.

Principal:

Excellent. Good to see someone's prepared and reliable.

Assistant Principal:

Yes, indeed. What she said.

Principal:

(Looks at the others, giving them the eye)

Hmmmmm. Right, back to work then!

Assistant Principal:

What she said.

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Principal:

(Gym Teacher goes to leave first, but is stopped by Principal)

Forgetting something are we Gym Teacher?

Assistant Principal:

Yes, Daniel. Forgotten something!

Gym Teacher:

Erm… Ah, yes. Sorry. I'll replace it now.

Principal:

Tut tut tut. Let's hit the hills staff!

Principal walks out.

Dead silence as everyone looks at each other for a short time.

Assistant Principal:

Well, that was awkward. She's quite in your face, isn't she?

Gym Teacher:

Don't try to butter up to us now, Mr Stevens.

Assistant Principal:

Sorry, I don't mean to be short when she's around, but it's my job. Assistant Principal.

Maths Teacher:

You mean, Assistant **to** the Principal.

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Assistant Principal:

Don't start that again, Mr Stevens.

Gym Teacher:

What's wrong – getting tired of being her lapdog?

Assistant Principal:

Well, yes, that to. I have to work with her all day. You just get small stints.

Librarian:

I suppose so.

Assistant Principal:

You know what the problem is, don't you?

History Teacher:

The same reason Mr Stevens didn't speak up, even when it's his big chance to day something.

Maths Teacher/Gym Teacher/Librarian/Assistant Principal:

Intimidating!

THE END