

Mrs. Lee

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WGAE Registered

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A classroom. MRS. LEE, 60s, a no-nonsense teacher, sits at her computer. MORGAN stands in the doorway behind a large medical cart. Morgan is a pleasant smiling 42-year-old person.

MORGAN
Port-o-donor!

MRS. LEE
Pardon?

MORGAN
Port-o-donor? Blood?

MRS. LEE
I understood the blood drive was
scheduled for tomorrow.

MORGAN
Due to popular demand it was
extended backwards to today.

MRS. LEE
I didn't receive a memo -

MORGAN
Oh. I could come back.

MRS. LEE
No need. I'm free this period.
You're here now. I'll only be a
minute -

Morgan rolls the cart through the door and behind Mrs. Lee's chair.

MORGAN
No need to interrupt what you're
doing. We come to you. That's
the point of port-o-doning. Have
you ever donated before?

MRS. LEE
Actually, no.

MORGAN
Well, this won't hurt at all.
I'll just drain you while you go
about your business.

MRS. LEE
I'm preparing for my next class.

MORGAN
Typing?

MRS. LEE
Keyboarding.

MORGAN
Keyboarding?

MRS. LEE
A more accurate description, of
course.

Mrs. Lee goes back to her work.

MORGAN
Ahhh. Nowadays everyone is so
busy, they don't have time to come
to us. I just finished draining
Mr. Sorkin, the drivers ed
teacher, while his students were
in the simulation trailer.

Morgan pulls out a chart.

MRS. LEE
You have a funny way of putting
it. *Draining* Mr. Sorkin.

MORGAN
Yep. We find a little humor
relaxes the donors. Have you
recently engaged in sexual
intercourse with multiple
partners, male or female, some or
all of whom you may not have
known?

MRS. LEE
Pardon?

MORGAN
Have to ask.

MRS. LEE
Oh. No.

MORGAN
Have you been jaundiced lately? A
little yellow around the gills?

MRS. LEE
No.

MORGAN
Have you ever shot up?

MRS. LEE
Excuse me?

MORGAN
Rode the horse?

MRS. LEE
Road a horse?

MORGAN
Have you ever injected yourself
with intravenous drugs?
Prescription or
(winks)
otherwise?

MRS. LEE
No.

Morgan pops a thermometer into Mrs. Lee's ear and wraps a blood
pressure cuff around her arm.

MORGAN
Have you barfed lately? Had a
temperature? Felt like shit?

MRS. LEE

No.

MORGAN

Have to ask the questions,
otherwise they'll flunk me.

MRS. LEE

Flunk you?

MORGAN

I mean *fire* me. Can my butt.
Temperature is 98.6, and blood
pressure is -

MRS. LEE

120/70.

MORGAN

120/70.

MRS. LEE

My bodily rhythms rarely variate.

MORGAN

Cool. Let's commence the hook up,
shall we?

MRS. LEE

Certainly.

MORGAN

Oh! Gonorrhoea?

MRS. LEE

No. How long should this take?

Morgan readies the tourniquet, needle, tubing, etc.

MORGAN

It'll be over before you know it.
By the way, we position this cart
behind the donor because some of
'em freak when they see their
blood coming out.

Morgan hunts for a vein.

Go ahead back to work while I
hunt. Some people have nice blue
MORGAN (CON'T)
throbbbers that stick right out
so's you'd have to be brain dead
to miss them, but other people are
more of a challenge. It looks
like you fall into that latter
category, Mrs. Lee.

MRS. LEE
Oh!

MORGAN
Sorry about that.

MRS. LEE
Oh!

MORGAN
Sorry about that.

MRS. LEE
Oh!

MORGAN
Sorry about that.

MRS. LEE
Oh!

MORGAN
Ding-Ding! We're in! That was
easier than I anticipated. And
away we go!

We see the thin tubing fill with red. The tubing disappears
behind Mrs. Lee, into the cart.

MORGAN
Don't let me interrupt you.

Morgan looks out at the classroom.

Wow. Nostalgia-ville.

MRS. LEE
Pardon?

MORGAN
Now they call it keyboarding.
That's progress for you.

MRS. LEE
Yes.

MORGAN
And you've kept right up with it.

MRS. LEE
I had to. Otherwise they would
have "flunked" me as you put it.

MORGAN
Yeah. Have to keep up. Me, I was
trained on the IBM Selectric 200
series. First IBM to come out
with the Magic Correcto Ribbon.

MRS. LEE
I remember it well. A fine
workhorse of a machine.

MORGAN
Yeah. Yeah. I sat right there.

MRS. LEE
You sat there?

MORGAN
Oh yeah. 4th period.

MRS. LEE
You went to this school?

MORGAN
Class of '77. Smack in the middle
of nowhere. Too late to be a
hippie. Too early to catch disco

fever. A real suck time to be in high school.

MRS. LEE
4th period. You were in my class.

MORGAN
Oh yeah.

MRS. LEE
I was your teacher.

MORGAN
Yep.

MRS. LEE
I'm not very good at remembering faces --

MORGAN
No problem. I didn't expect you to. Me, I can't swim to a save my life, but I sure can remember names and faces. You flunked me.

MRS. LEE
I flunked you?

MORGAN
Yep. F. F. F. F. 4 quarters in a row. Senior year. Yeah. Really did a number on my grade point average. Lost my scholarship to that Ivy League school.

MRS. LEE
Oh.

MORGAN
Yeah. It was a real shame. Let's see how you're doing -- everything is just dandy.

MRS. LEE

Well, if I flunked you, as you say-

MORGAN
Oh yeah. You did.

MRS. LEE
It certainly hasn't prohibited you.

MORGAN
Prohibited me?

MRS. LEE
From succeeding. In an occupation.

MORGAN
F. F. F. F.

MRS. LEE
Not everyone is cut out for -

MORGAN
I had the fastest fingers in the class. I cruised those keys. I sure did like to type.

MRS. LEE
It was an attendance issue?

MORGAN
Never missed a class. Not a one. Even sat in on some of your other classes. For practice.

MRS. LEE
Oh.

MORGAN
Yep. Yep. Do you still do those tests at the end?

MRS. LEE
Timed writings?

MORGAN

I never could figure out why they were called timed writings. Why weren't they called timed typings?

MRS. LEE

I don't know.

MORGAN

You still do them? Every day?

MRS. LEE

I'm selecting one for my next class even as we speak.

MORGAN

Oh yeah? Wow. 5 minutes? Is it still 5 minutes?

MRS. LEE

Yes.

MORGAN

Do you still use that timer? BING!

Mrs. Lee pulls the timer out and sets it on her desk. Morgan picks it up, winds it, we hear it ticking.

Eye on the page, not on the keys!

MRS. LEE

That's right. Eye on the page.

MORGAN

I could burn rubber on those keys. By second quarter I was clocking in at 85 wpms. Words per minute.

MRS. LEE

Impressive. I'm not sure I understand what the problem was.

MORGAN

Accuracy. I had an accuracy issue.

MRS. LEE

Ah.

MORGAN
5 is the limit.

MRS. LEE
It still is.

MORGAN
5 mistakes in 5 minutes.

MRS. LEE
Yes.

MORGAN
6 mistakes and your timed writing
was invalid.

MRS. LEE
Yes.

MORGAN
6 mistakes and you were *out*.

MRS. LEE
Yes.

MORGAN
6 mistakes and it wouldn't matter
if you'd typed 185 wpms.

MRS. LEE
Correct.

MORGAN
You were OUT! BING!

MRS. LEE
Well. Yes.

MORGAN
Timed writing! Turn to page 70,
and you'd wind that timer and it's
a miracle I didn't heave all over
the typewriter like Laura
Wingfield in The Glass Menagerie.

Begin! And 45 IBM Selectric 200 series would commence to clatter like some deranged beehive. All the timed writing paragraphs had the same motivational theme. *You can achieve your goals if you put your eye on the ball.* I'd start sweating in my very soul and it would leak out of my trembling

MORGAN (CON'T)

fingers and you'd hover over our shoulders like GOD, it's a wonder we didn't have a collective convulsion. I'd start out with determination, "I will type the right keys, I will not make any mistakes," but then I'd type p-o-e-p-l-e and f-r-e-i-n-d and f-u-c-k-y, which was more of a Freudian slip than an actual mistake, and then there would come that hellish moment when I knew all was lost and I'd give in and let my fingers fly. Then BING! and the beehive would cease and the worst part, Mrs. Lee, was yet to come. *Give your partner your timed writing* My partner was Ken. He was a cute redheaded popular football player. We never spoke. We just exchanged. Ken was a slow but consistent typer. Clocked in at about 43 wpm with 3 mistakes. He'd circle my mistakes and I'd burn with a humiliation red as his hair, a humiliation you will never fully appreciate, Mrs. Lee. 102 wpm with 38 mistakes. Invalid. 5 days a week for a whole year, I did not achieve validity. Not once. A few years later Ken asphyxiated himself in his

parent's garage, but I didn't take it personally.

MRS. LEE
Am I almost done?

MORGAN
I never got a timed writing. Not one.

MRS. LEE
You needed to slow down. A timed writing is a test for both speed *and* accuracy. Both are important, but ultimately accuracy is more so.

MORGAN
How so?

MRS. LEE
After the fact speed hardly matters, but certainly the document needs to be accurate. I'm feeling a little light headed.

MORGAN
I could have been accurate.

MRS. LEE
I doubt at those speeds that you could.

MORGAN
Why'd you do it, Mrs. Lee?

MRS. LEE
There are rules that govern -

MORGAN
No, no. I mean why did you remove all the corrector ribbons from the Selectrics? I could have

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corrected my mistakes while I went along and I **still** would have been the fastest fingers in the room.

MRS. LEE

I removed the corrector ribbons so that you wouldn't use them.

MORGAN

I could have gotten A. A. A. A.

MRS. LEE

My philosophy is that it is better to learn not to make mistakes in the first place. Not to get in the mistake habit. That is not an unusual teaching practice.

MORGAN

To err is human, Mrs. Lee.

MRS. LEE

Not in my classroom.

MORGAN

And now, with these whippy computers, you can correct as you go along *and* do a spell check at the end.

MRS. LEE

Not in my classroom. Those features are withheld until the last half of fourth quarter.

MORGAN

What?!

MRS. LEE

So the students will learn not to make mistakes in the first place.

MORGAN

Who cares? If, as you say, the end result is accuracy, who cares how they get there?

MRS. LEE

It's the principle of the thing. I'm feeling woozy. Perhaps we should discontinue this.

MORGAN

Oh, you're doing fine. You're almost through.

MRS. LEE

The goal is to complete the task utilizing as few keystrokes as possible. Mistakes are extra keystrokes.

MORGAN

Ask me how I've earned my living since I graduated, Mrs. Lee.

MRS. LEE

I think perhaps I've given enough blood. Oh dear.

She attempts to pull out the shunt.

MORGAN

Oh no, Mrs. Lee, don't do that! You could cause an air bubble which would go right to your heart and bing! Where was I? Employment. Let's see, I've been a secretary, a transcriptionist, an operator for the Sears catalog, a court reporter -

MRS. LEE

Could you please help me here, I need -

MORGAN

I really wanted to be a
Gastroentologist. But I lost my
scholarship.

MRS. LEE

Please, I'm begging you to take
the needle out now. I'm not
feeling at all well -

MORGAN

You're doing just fine.

MRS. LEE

It's unfortunate that you lost
your scholarship.

MORGAN

If you'd just let me use that
corrector ribbon, Mrs. Lee.

MRS. LEE

I couldn't. It's against my
philosophy.

MORGAN

You ruined my life.

MRS. LEE

It would have been a disservice to
the students.

MORGAN

And now I'm on disability.

MRS. LEE

I don't understand -

MORGAN

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. Shot down
my career in the prime of life.

MRS. LEE

But you're a nurse or a blood
technician --

MORGAN

Oh no, Mrs. Lee. I do this for a hobby.

MRS. LEE

Oh dear.

MORGAN

I want you to apologize, Mrs. Lee.

MRS. LEE

(feebly)

Help. Someone in the hall. Help.

MORGAN

I want to hear you say you're sorry for ruining my whole entire life.

MRS. LEE

I didn't -- I mean -- I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

MORGAN

That wasn't very sincere, Mrs. Lee.

MRS. LEE

Unhook me and I'll I'll I'll give you a timed writing. I know you can get one!

MORGAN

Too late. Carpal Tunnel.

MRS. LEE

Why, why are you --

She is losing strength rapidly now.

MORGAN

F. F. F. F. I COULD HAVE BEEN SOMEBODY!!!

MRS. LEE
Accuracy...accuracy...accuracy.

The timer bings. Mrs. Lee slumps over her keyboard. Morgan takes her pulse.

MORGAN
BP is zero over zero. Would you care for some juice, Mrs. Lee? Or perhaps a sprinkled doughnut? I'd like to take you up on that timed writing offer, but I've got to get down and see Mrs. Murphy, the *swimming* teacher.

Morgan pulls a 3-gallon blood bag from the cart behind Mrs. Lee.

MORGAN
BING!

Lights out.