

Wolfman Thompson
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Period 1

Laid-Back Lindsay

"Have you heard the latest?" Mrs. VanVleet asks, fists clenched into tight pink balls, cheeks burning with anger.

"Uh, no..." I look up from my desk as she enters. Within minutes, four raving teachers are gathered to complain about whatever the administration has done to make us crazy this time. It's hard to believe that people who are usually so mild-mannered and kind become such a wild pack of wolves over things that seem so minor in retrospect. We shout, we stomp, we criticize and condemn. Most students never see this side of teachers, but I know one who has, and I trust her to keep our complaint sessions a secret. Lindsay Hatch is my teacher's assistant during my preparation hour. She is my voice of reason on days when I am in trouble with the principal or with other teachers (which is often), and I'm glad she is so level-headed and laid-back. She keeps me from going crazy.

Nothing seems to bother Lindsay. One day I told her quite plainly that I was going to drop my four-year-old into a vat of boiling oil because of the tantrums she throws every morning. I arrived at school ruffled and worn out, even though I hadn't yet taught any classes! Lindsay, who could tell I was frustrated, shrugged casually and said, "Why?" And then after I'd told my story about the miserable morning I'd had, I felt better. And I

did not have to boil my kid after all, so she can thank Lindsay for saving her life.

Some days I don't have much TA work for Lindsay to do, so we can sit around and chat (about how hard Mrs. Palmer's ninth-grade English class is, among other topics). Other days I've got lots of little jobs I need performed. Because I am generally not very organized, I'll suddenly remember this two minutes before the period is over. "Here, Lindsay, can you run off these twelve papers for me--fifteen copies of each--and three-hole punch them on this edge; then take this note to Mrs. Kallas in ISS; after that, go to the book room and get fifteen copies of the little blue books on the highest shelf; then stop by the office and ask Mrs. Oliver if she has anymore of that stuff to clean off the boards...and when you get back, use it to wipe them off! OK?" Lindsay nods calmly and ten minutes later she's back, all the tasks complete. Because she is so efficient, Lindsay helps keep me sane.

Lindsay is usually quiet. She never made a lot of noise when she was a student in my seventh and eighth grade classes. Most of what I knew about her was from the papers she turned in. I think because she knows how to keep her mouth shut, she has many friends who trust her. I mean she knows EVERYBODY!

"Man, I have this kid in seventh period that's making me mental!" I groaned the other day.

"Who?" Lindsay asked. I told her the name--which I won't

repeat because I wouldn't want to embarrass the squirrely little goon--and she said, "Oh, yeah, I know who he is." Then she told me a little about him. Having Lindsay around is better than having a parent's phone number in the computer! Not only does she often know things parents don't, but I can vent my spleen (and call the kid all the dirty names I want), and nobody gets mad at me for it.

When it comes to looks, Lindsay is one of those fortunate girls who is going to be attractive all her life. She has straight blonde hair and blue eyes. She is as thin as any fashion model could wish to be, and she carries herself in a relaxed and comfortable manner. She seems satisfied to be who she is, and I think that's a quality many teenagers lack. Lindsay usually dresses in casual, loose-fitting clothes. She is not flashy; even the silver rings she wears are simply designed. She never paints her fingernails, and if she wears much make up, I can't tell. (She doesn't need it.) Lindsay is a naturally pretty young woman who is not out to impress anyone, and I think that's part of the reason she does.

I'm glad that Lindsay is my teacher's assistant. She is calm, cool, and collected, and I can count on her to get things done quickly and efficiently. I think she impresses her friends for many of the same reasons she impresses me, and I'm glad I have the opportunity (on some days) just to sit and talk with her. She will go far in life...if she can get out of Mrs. Palmer's English class alive!