

MY FORENSICS COACH IS NOT A JELLYBEAN

By Bradley Walton

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MY FORENSICS COACH IS NOT A JELLYBEAN

A Ten Minute Comedy Monologue

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SYNOPSIS: The forensics coach used to dress in black. But one day, that changed. One day, the forensics coach began to wear...color. Bright colors. Assorted colors. Like jellybeans. And one of his students can't get the thought out of her head. In fact, the thought is so overwhelming that today, she can't even practice her original oratory speech because all she can think about is sinking her teeth into her coach's bright red shirt. She suspects that things are going to end badly. She is probably right.

Cast: 1 Male or 1 Female

Set: Bare Stage

AUTHOR NOTES

Two of my forensics students said that my shirts made them think of jellybeans, and that I should write a script about a forensics student mesmerized by the jellybean-ness of her coach's shirt. I wasn't sure at first where I could go with the concept, but the more I thought about it, the more I liked it. This script is what I came up with.

Thanks to Daelynn McCleve and Merrill Harmison.

AT RISE: *The NARRATOR, a teenager dressed for school, on a bare stage. HE or SHE seems anxious.*

My forensics coach is not a jellybean. I mean, I know deep down that he's not. But I keep having to tell myself over and over again. He's staring at me very intently right now and he is not a jellybean. He's wondering why there's this long awkward pause in the middle of my original oratory speech and he is still not a jellybean. He is tapping his pen impatiently on the table and he will never, ever be a jellybean. I wish I could convince myself. And I am very, very concerned that things are going to end badly.

This never used to be a problem. He used to wear black turtlenecks to school all the time. They matched his black pants and his black shoes and he looked like he was part of a stage crew. I never once thought of jellybeans. But then the principal retired and her replacement made collared dress shirts mandatory for all male faculty members.

So my forensics coach went out and bought a bunch of dress shirts. All of them in very bright, single colors.

Completely unlike what he used to wear.

Completely like a jellybean.

Okay, not really. It's not as if he's fat or short or round. He isn't. He's tall and skinny. If anything, he looks more like a crayon than a jellybean. But I don't want to flip him upside down and rub his face in a coloring book. I want to bite into him.

This would get me kicked off the team. A smear on my college applications. My future would be ruined. I'd wind up selling pencils to tourists on street corners or something.

The weird thing is, I'm not a connoisseur of jellybeans. I don't eat them very often, so I have no idea why I'm stuck on this.

I wonder how long I've been standing here saying nothing. My forensics coach is looking at me with a weird mixture of irritation and boredom. There is a zit forming on his forehead. I take a deep breath, and with more effort than I'd like to admit, I shift my attention away from his shirt and onto the zit. Which is slightly disgusting, but frees my brain up enough to force words out of my mouth.

"Sorry. I zoned out."

"Obviously," my coach says as if he was addressing a microscopic parasite.

"Would you like for me to start my speech over?" I ask with as much butt-kissing helpfulness as my pathetic voice can muster.

"You never started in the first place," says my coach.

Oops. I think my brain was even further off track than I realized.

"Oh. Right. Sorry," I say. "I'll get going with that, then."

My speech is a persuasive essay about how most science fiction is actually science fantasy, and the failure to distinguish between the two will lead to the decline of the civilized world. It has nothing to do with jellybeans. If I can just focus on my speech, I should be fine.

"Not too long ago, in our very own galaxy..." I say the words confidently, fixing my eyes on my coach's forehead zit, and I can feel my composure returning. Nine words down. So far, so good. I can do this. But as I complete the sentence, my coach shifts in his seat and my eyes flick down to his shirt and the next words come out wrong.

"A new jellybean was born."

No! I can't say that! There are no jellybeans in space!

“What?” My coach looks down at his hard copy of my speech. “Isn’t it supposed to be ‘genre’?”

“Right! It is. Thank you.” I nod my head a little too appreciatively.

My coach looks at me questioningly. “Jellybean?”

“Rhymes with genre. Threw me off.”

“No, it doesn’t.”

“True. But they’re similar. Kind of. Got the words mixed up.”

“Start over.”

I begin to sweat. I can feel the beads forming on my face like little clear jellybeans. No! Don’t think like that! Focus!

“Not too long ago, in our very own galaxy, a new genre was born.” There. I did it!

“Do you think you can say it without contorting your face like you’re in pain?” asks my coach.

“My face was contorting?”

“Like you were trying to pull out your wisdom teeth with a spatula. It was impressive, yet disturbing.”

“You’ve seen someone pull out their own wisdom teeth with a spatula?”

“No. It’s impossible.”

“Then why—“

“Because it’s exactly the expression you were making. Now start over.”

I close my eyes and take a deep breath. I think about my speech. About the absurdity of what passes for science fiction. The ridiculousness of something like lightsabers—with beams of light that somehow either stop or double back on themselves at a fixed range, and come in an assortment of bright fruity colors like jellybeans.

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