

Drama Class (This Actually Happened)

by

Simon Wiedemann

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INT: DRAMA CLASS - DAY

Here is a well-lit room of grey carpet and white walls. Seated in the middle and in a semi-circle are five fifteen/sixteen year old PUPILS. (From left to right, GREG, SARAH, HARRY, CLIVE and BEN). They face three rows of observing PUPILS (all 15/16). In-between the groups and occasionally switching towards them, is the female TEACHER (40s).

TEACHER

Today's lesson will all be about peer pressure. What I'm going to do, is give these five people here a code that Charlie doesn't know about. Here it is: When I clap once, that means 'two' and when I clap twice in succession, that means 'one'. So if you hear me clap once, once again, then twice, you count 'five'. You then clap five times, one by one, from left to right. When Charlie comes back in the room, he won't know about the code, so he'll think he should clap FOUR times. However, he may be influenced by you all and clap five, instead. That's what we'll find out. Understood?

The FIVE murmur in agreement.

TEACHER

Excellent. I'll call Charlie back in.

The TEACHER walks to the door and opens it to reveal CHARLIE (15).

TEACHER

Come in, Charlie and stand with me.

CHARLIE walks with the TEACHER in-between the two groups.

TEACHER

(to the six)

What I'm going to do is a very simple exercise. All I want you six to do is count how many times I clap, then clap back the same number, in turn. You clap last, Charlie. Understood?

The six murmur.

TEACHER

Great!

The TEACHER claps once, then twice, then once, then once.

After a few moment's thought, GREG scratches his head and claps 7 times. SARAH then claps 5 times, HARRY then claps 8, CLIVE then claps 9, then BEN claps twice. The TEACHER looks grave. CHARLIE looks around the room nervously, then claps 5 times.

TEACHER
Charlie, would you like to leave the room, again?

CHARLIE leaves in a daze. Then the TEACHER talks to the remaining five.

TEACHER
This is very simple. When I clap ONCE that means TWO. When I clap TWICE, that means one. I'll try again.

The TEACHER claps once, then once, then twice.

TEACHER
Got that?

GREG claps five times, as do the four others, one by one.

TEACHER
Great! One more time...

The TEACHER claps twice, then twice, then once.

GREG claps four times, as do the others again, in turn.

TEACHER
Excellent.

The TEACHER opens the door again and invites CHARLIE back in. The two stand in-between the two groups.

TEACHER
Ok, let's try this again.

The TEACHER claps once, then once, then once, then twice. GREG responds by clapping four times, SARAH claps five times, HARRY claps four times, CLIVE claps three times and BEN claps ten times. CHARLIE looks blank and shrugs his shoulders. He then claps five times and looks to the TEACHER.

TEACHER
Well, this has been a complete disaster, hasn't it?

CHARLIE
This really shouldn't be that difficult. I could count when I was four.

TEACHER
I know, Charlie.