

SCHOOL SWAP

Chapter 4

Jay couldn't sleep. There was no way he was getting into Mr Jones's bed, let alone his pyjamas! Anyway, he had to come up with a good excuse for how he'd managed to destroy the microwave and his dinner. On the upside, he had proved that there really could be smoke without fire; on the downside, he knew Mr Jones was going to have a mega meltdown—just like the microwave.

But when Mr Jones arrived early next morning to collect Jay, he didn't even bother to look at the scorched kitchen. "We've more important things to worry about," he said. "Now get in the car."

"You do remember the plan, don't you?" Mr Jones asked as he parked.

Jay nodded. Mr Jones had been over it three times already: act like him, stick to his lesson plan and give him a playtime detention.

"Good," said Mr Jones. "Then, while everyone else is outside, we can do everything we did yesterday in exactly the same way and swap back."

"I've got the football team trials at lunch," said Jay. "Are you sure it'll work?"

"It has to," said Mr Jones. "Just don't forget the detention!"

Jay smiled. "Mr Jones," he said, "giving you a detention is going to be easy!"

But it wasn't.

Acting like Mr Jones was not easy at all; it was as if the class could sense he was new to it. Sticking to the lesson plan was even more difficult because they kept asking for extra football practice again.

"Aw, please, Sir!" said Adil. "We need extra practice to get ready for the trials."

Jay took a deep breath. He couldn't believe he was about to say this. "No, Adil. Comprehension is far more important than football. Now get on."

A handful of children put their heads back down, but the rest held firm.

"Oh, come on, Sir..." said Adil. "Footy!"

"I said no!" snapped Jay in what he thought was a firm voice. But it came out as firm as candy floss in a pillowcase.

"Football! Football! Football!" someone started to chant from the back of the class.

Adil and the rest joined in: "Football! Football! Football!"



“Stop that!” ordered Jay. But it didn’t work. Whatever magic order-giving power Mr Jones had, Jay just didn’t have it.

“I said stop that at once!” He tried more loudly, but still the class chanted on.

Jay looked round: every one of them was joining in now. Well, every one of them except him! He looked at his face and tried to read the eyes. What would Mr Jones do?

Mr Jones would give them a class detention. But Jay couldn’t do that. How could they try and switch back with the entire class there?

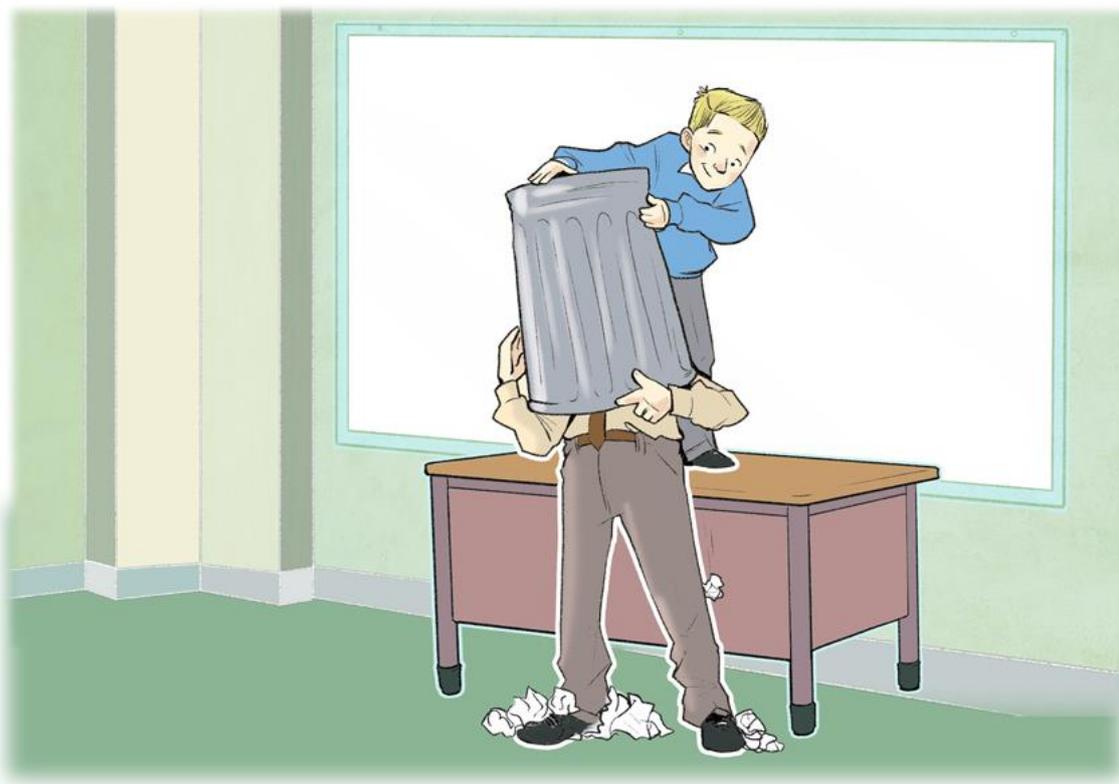
The plan wasn’t working! There was no way Mr Jones could ever behave worse than the whole class was behaving now. Could he?

But Jay had seriously underestimated his teacher. With a sudden whoop, Mr Jones left his seat, grabbed the nearby paper bin and jumped onto his desk.

“FOOTBALL! FOOTBALL! FOOTBALL!” he yelled, hopping from one desk to another, as if they were stepping stones across a stream, carrying the bin on his head. The class cheered him on.

With one final jump, Mr Jones leapt across onto the teacher’s desk and upended the bin right over Jay’s head, causing a flurry of paper and pencil sharpenings to tumble down. He grinned at Jay and winked.

Jay didn’t see the funny side of it. This time, his voice was as hard as a diamond.



“EVERYONE BACK IN THEIR SEATS AT ONCE!” he yelled. The class fell silent while Mr Jones returned to Jay’s seat, failing to hide a cheeky grin.

“PLAYTIME DETENTION, JAY!” Jay yelled at Mr Jones. “And everyone else get out your Comprehension books... NOW!”

This time, they did.