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It was a Friday afternoon in late October when I stopped at the superintendent's office to say "Good Night" to him. He mumbled something that sounded vaguely like "Good Night" then swiveled his chair to face me and stated that I was not to come back to school on Monday, I felt sure that I had misunderstood and asked him to repeat which he did. I asked if school had been called off for some reason and he said, "No, you disobeyed a direct order and I am replacing you.

Stunned, I asked him to explain and he replied, "You know well enough what you did, and I am letting you go. DO NOT COME BACK!" He swiveled his chair away from me and continued with the work on his desk.

I drove home in a haze wondering what unheard of thing I had done, but could not think of a thing. I loved the children in my 4<sup>th</sup> grade class and they seemed to be friendly to me. Had I unthinking done something wrong? What was the reason for my dismissal. Yes, I had told Jimmy to pick up the paper he had tossed at the basket and missed. I had asked Georgette not to whisper to the student across the aisle, but these were disciplines accepted in every classroom.

Reaching home, I broke down and wept on my husband's shoulder until I could collect myself enough to tell him what had happened. He immediately called an attorney friend and told him my story, asking if there was any way I could find cause for the dismissal.

Friend suggested that I ask the School board for a hearing, which I did for the next Monday night. The whole town turned out for the open meeting of the School Board. The meeting was opened and the chairman called on me to explain why I had asked for the meeting.

I explained what has transpired and asked for a "reason" for my dismissal. The Superintendent stood and looking me in the eye stated that I was tutoring one of the students "against orders." I inquired what he meant and before he could explain, the mother of the student stood up screaming that I had been teaching her daughter how to read, she would not stand for that because if the girl learned to read she (the mother) would lose control of her, (the daughter).

The girl had been in the class for the few weeks of school and had never recited nor read during class, making excuses of head ache, etc. it was then I realized she could not read anything. I asked her if she wanted to learn to read and with brightening eyes she admitted she really wanted to learn. So I had her come to school fifteen minutes early, had her stay in from one recess period a day and often for a few minutes after school. Within two weeks she had lost the inability to read the most simple sentence, she was well into the first primer and was avid to learn.

The father of another student stood and told the school board that the parents of the fourth-grade students were very happy with my teaching and suggested that I continue the year, to decide at contract-signing time if I wished to return. The audience vocally seconded his motion as one voice, and the School Board, after a very short conference, said my contract was in order and I was to teach until the end of the year and decide at that time if I wanted to return...I did not return. The girl did not learn to read, and when her mother died twenty or so years after this incident, the now grown married woman screamed and cried that she could no longer live without her mother. She could not read the newspapers, mail, recipe, cook book or any other written thing.

I still regret the fact that the girl never learned to read, and that I could do nothing to help her learn.