

## **KinderCare Academy**

By Grace Perrotta

### **Characters:**

**Mrs. Beverage-** A passionate kindergarten teacher. Friendly and nice.

**Elsy:** Bossy. Confident. Eager. Borderline Obnoxious.

**Taft:** Sensitive. A little more to himself. A bright young kindergartener. Hard on himself.

**Lily:** British. New kid at school. The voice of reason, but still has some quirks.

**Calum:** A loud bully who is actually just a sensitive boy. Very emotionally driven, dramatic, and impatient.

*Lights up. It's just another normal day at school. There are 4 seats. **Elsey** is seated in the front and **Calum** in is the back. **Mrs. Beverage** is observing **Lily** who is at the front of the class nervously clutching a stuffed penguin. She stands anxiously in silence as the class waits for her to speak.*

**CALUM:**

SAY SOMETHING!

**MRS. B:**

Calum, please! It's only Lily's second day at KinderCare Academy. It's normal for her to be nervous. Lily, start whenever you're ready.

**LILY:**

Thank you, Mrs. Beverage. *(Takes a breath as if she is going to start; however, gets very nervous and does nothing)*

**ELSEY:**

Oh come on!!! Can I please go? I brought my kazoo.

**MRS. B**

Tomorrow is your turn. Today is Lily and Taft.

**ELSEY:**

Taft's not here!

**CALUM:**

Can I play your kazoo?

**ELSEY:**

*(Gets up and leans her body over the desk towards **Calum**)* Over my DEAD BODY -

**MRS. B:**

Whoa- Elsey, sit down- there will be no dead bodies in this room today!

**LILY:**

Mrs. Beverage. I am ready to give my presentation.

**MRS. B:**

Wonderful!

**LILY:**

Hello, I'm Lily.

**ELSEY:**

*(Establishing dominance)* Hi, Lily!

**LILY:**

*(lifting up her penguin plush)* This is Kringle! He's also from England

**CALUM:**

I don't care about Lily or her crumpet thing!

**LILY:**

- Kringle

**CALUM:**

I wanna play with the blocks!

**MRS. B:**

Calum! That's it. You'll be sitting with me during recess...again. *(Calum is happy but still tries to hide his crush)*

*(Taft enters in a shuffle)*

**TAFT:**

Sorry I'm late. *(sniffles)*

**CALUM:**

Are you crying?

**TAFT:**

*(Lying)* No-

**CALUM:**

TAFFY'S CRYING!

**MRS. B:**

Calum, do you want to spend every recess with me?

**CALUM:**

...No!

**LILY:**

May I please sit down?

**MRS. B:**

Of course. Taft, is everything okay?

**TAFT:**

Well... *(goes and talks to Mrs. B)*

**CALUM:**

Why does Taft always get special treatment?

**ELSEY:**

Why do you care?

**CALUM:**

I DON'T

**TAFT:**

*(Hugs Mrs. B)* Thank you. *(Taft smiles and sits down)*

**MRS. B:**

We have to move on. We are going to finish the flowers we were making for Mother's Day. *(Grabs chest)* Who would like to pass them out?

*(Elsey just gets up and does so. She hands a flower to everyone but Lily.)*

**MRS. B:**

Elsey, thank you, but you need to let others have a chance once in a while.

**LILY:**

Mrs. Beverage, I did not receive a flower.

**MRS. B:**

Here, take mine. *(Hands Lily a flower)*

**LILY:**

Thank you!

**MRS. B:**

Of course! *(Clutches her chest)* Umm, Take out your- *(starts slurring words)* backpacks- gets paper- to mom.

**ELSEY:**

Mrs. Beverage?

**MRS. B:**

Mothers flowers mom *(falls to the ground)*

*(The kids are silent and in shock)*

**LILY:**

Is she teaching us to dream?

*(Calum gets up and approaches Mrs. Beverage)*

**CALUM:**

*(Just loud enough for Mrs. B to hear, but not the others)* Mrs. Beverage? *(Hesitantly attempts to shake her awake)* Mrs. Beverage, ya gotta get up. We got a recess date, remember?

*(He realizes she is not responding and is overcome with grief. He goes beside her and repeats "Mrs. Beverage? Wake up!" as the other children get up and see what's going on.)*

**ELSEY:**

Doesn't this remind you of something?

**LILY:**

Not really-

**ELSEY:**

The same thing happened to Mufasa in The Lion King.

*(The kids gasp in distress. Calum ferociously sobs and squeezes Mrs. Beverage)*

**CALUM:**

That's poop talk. The Lion King is pretend! *(Goes under Mrs. B's hand like Simba does to Mufasa)* She's not... NOPE!

**LILY:**

This is bad! This is all bad! WE NEED TO TELL AN AUTHORITY FIGURE.

**ELSEY:**

*(In an apologetic yet condescending tone)* Shhh shhhh. Lily, it's done. It's too late.

**LILY:**

She's gone?

**CALUM:**

NO! I'll give her CPR. *(Calum plugs and unplugs Mrs. B's nose repeatedly thinking that's what you need to do)* IT'S NOT WORKING!

**TAFT:**

Maybe put her hand in warm water?

**ELSEY:**

He's trying to fix her, not make her pee! Just let me handle it. *(Gets out toy doctor gear and observes Mrs. B)* Yup, she is vaccinated.

**LILY:**

What?

**ELSEY:**

Vaccinated. Like vacation. But from earth... Forever.

**CALUM:**

Oh no- My doctor wants me to get vaccinated soon.

**TAFT:**

Uhhhh... this may be my fault.

**LILY:**

*(Stares at Taft in fear)* What did you do?

**TAFT:**

The same thing happened to my dog this morning. I hugged him and he wasn't breathing... That's why I was late.

*(The kids all take a step away from Taft)*

**TAFT:**

What?

**CALUM:**

You're cursed, dummy!

**ELSEY:**

The TV told me death comes in threes once. Someone's next.

*(The kids gasp)*

**TAFT:**

Oh no, I hugged my mom before I got here.

**ELSEY:**

Yeah, she's going to die.

**CALUM:**

Taft should have just stayed home! UGH *(turns away from the group and bargains with the big man upstairs)* Please bring her back! I'll stop pushing down blocks! I'll stop missing the toilet! Anything!

**TAFT:**

Calum, it's okay! My parents said Buddy is at this really fun farm. That's where Mrs. Beverage is too. That's what happens! Right? Right? *(goes up to Elsey)*

**ELSEY:**

No touching-

**TAFT:**

Sorry.

**ELSEY:**

Let's move on! We have to throw Mrs. Beverage a funeral so she doesn't go to the underworld.

**LILY:**

Wouldn't Mrs. Beverage's family be in charge of that-

**ELSEY:**

She's a teacher! She doesn't have a family, DUH!

**CALUM:**

How do we do a funeral?

**ELSEY:**

Well, first, let go of her. *(He does so. Mrs. B plops to the floor.)* Okay, so open basket or closed basket? I'm thinking open.

**CALUM:**

*(Depressed)* We don't have any baskets.

**TAFT:**

...I have a backpack!

**CALUM:**

Not Taft's! He's infected. We're gonna use mine.

**ELSEY:**

Let's move her here.

*(The kids struggle to move her on desks but do so successfully. Once she is on the desk the kids dramatically put her in a mummy position and place the backpack on her. Elsey makes sure it's open.)*

**ELSEY:**

Now we must all pray.

*(The children go around Mrs.B)*

**ELSEY:**

In the name of the father and the son and the spooky ghost, amen.

**ALL BUT LILY:**

Hakuna Matata. World without end, amen.

**ELSEY:**

Okay, so at a funeral there is a funeral king.

**LILY:**

Are you sure-

**ELSEY:**

THIS IS HOW WE DO IT IN AMERICA, LILY. Go hug your bird Kissenger.

**LILY:**

- Kringle

**ELSEY:**

Anyway, (*Calms down*) the funeral king always gives a big speech about the person in the basket.

**CALUM:**

Who's gonna be the funeral king?

**ELSEY:**

I'm gonna be the girl funeral king.

**LILY:**

So, a funeral queen!

**ELSEY:**

Girl funeral king.

**TAFT:**

Why can't anyone else have a chance?

**ELSEY:**

I'm the only expert in funerals. Maybe one of you can do it next time.

**TAFT:**

When is there a next time?

**CALUM:**

Your mom, remember?

**TAFT:**

Stop it!

**CALUM:**

Ha! Like you'd be sad, Taffy. You weren't sad about Mrs. Beverage.

**TAFT:**

I WAS! I AM! I LOVED MRS. BEVERAGE. STOP!

**CALUM:**

Make me stop, Taffy.

**TAFT:**

My name is TAFT!

*(Taft explodes with anger and chases Calum around the room. Everyone is quite shocked by Taft's intense emotion. The boys counter each other from across Mrs. B's body and eventually use her limbs as a way to strike the other. The backpack falls over and papers fall out)*

**TAFT:**

*(Picks up the papers)*

**CALUM:**

NO!

**TAFT:**

*(Reading)* Roses are red, violets are blue. I love you, Mrs. Beverage. What rhymes with Beverage? *(the kids laugh at him)*

**CALUM:**

You will pay for this!

*(The fighting resumes)*

**ELSEY:**

ORDER! ORDER! *(Goes in but ends up getting hit and she joins the fight)*

**LILY:**

PLEASE STOP!

*(The kids stop for a moment, but after a beat they resume Elsey springs into action and goes for the penguin in Lily's bag. tries to get the penguin. They throw it around the room. Until Lily finally retrieves it.)*

**LILY:**

WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU ALL? Why are you doing this? There is a dead woman in this room and you people are fighting? *(beat)* I know I only knew her for *(counts her fingers)* a day and a couple of hours. But I know this is NOT the way Mrs. Beverage would want you to act. Would she?

**CALUM:**

No

**LILY:**

In that short... short time I had with her, I could tell she was a lovely teacher. The kind of teacher that would give you sweets if you answered something right.

**CALUM:**

*(Getting choked up)* She did. She did that.

**LILY:**

And who actually knows where she is now...

**ELSEY:**

She's in the sky with Mufasa... and Taft's dog... and Taft's mom.

*(Taft audibly is flustered and hurt by this comment)*

**LILY:**

Maybe that is true. But we aren't going to find out anytime soon. All I know is that she deserves to be celebrated.

**CALUM:**

You're so right.

**LILY:**

It's time Mrs. Beverage gets the respect she deserves. We need to start being mindful of each other and live in a way Mrs. Beverage will be proud of. Let us get this ...funeral started.

**ELSEY:**

*(Looks around and notices an upset Taft)* Um, Taft. Do you want to be the girl funeral king instead?

**TAFT:**

Really?

**ELSEY:**

Yeah, I'll just provide the music.

**TAFT:**

But the curse.-

**CALUM:**

Taft, it's okay. We have to do this... for Mrs. Beverage.

**ALL:**

For Mrs. Beverage!

*(The kids get into funeral position. **Elsey** grabs a kazoo out of her bag and starts to play Taps as **Taft** gives his eulogy)*

**TAFT:**

*(Stepping forward)* “There once was a tree... and she loved a little boy very, very much – even more than she loved herself.” This quote from The Giving Tree has always reminded me of Mrs. Beverage. She loved us. She was always ready to give us her leaves, apples, trunk, or in Lily’s case... her flower. I love my mom, but sometimes I loved Mrs. Beverage a little bit more. Don’t tell my mom I said that. But it’s true. I think it was true for all of us. Mrs. Beverage, maybe you’re at a farm, maybe you’re in the sky, maybe you’re nowhere. But, you’re not dead. You’re alive because you live in us.

*(**Lily** takes her flower and places it on **Mrs. B**, the other kids do the same. **Taft** is the last to put his down)*

**TAFT:**

Thank you, Mrs. Beverage.

*(**Elsey** takes out her kazoo once more and plays a short part of “The Circle of Life” from The Lion King all the kids hug! Suddenly all the kids besides **Taft** fall to the ground. **Taft** stands there in shock and screams)*