

VALENCIA
(THE WOMAN WHO SKIPPED 4TH GRADE AND HAD TO GO BACK)

"Schmitt Happens"

Written by E.J. Rupert

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© Jimmy Rupe Productions
(414) 550-0547
ejrupert@yahoo.com

INT. SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

In class at an Indianapolis school, the teacher, MR. TUCKER BRAUN (30's), points to a chalkboard and addresses his class of fourth-graders.

MR. BRAUN

Okay, class, who can solve this problem?
46 plus 89?

A WOMAN speaks off-camera.

WOMAN (O.C.)

Oooh, me, me! I know!

Mr. Braun SIGHS and smirks.

MR. BRAUN

Anybody at all?

WOMAN (O.C.)

Me! Me! Oooh!

MR. BRAUN

Anybody besides Ms. Schmitt?

The woman is VALENCIA SCHMITT (30's). She overflows out of a tiny desk, surrounded by the other kids at the same-size desks. She puts her hand down.

WOMAN/VALENCIA

(scoffs)

Fine.

LANDON (9) raises his hand. He stands up.

MR. BRAUN

Yes, Landon?

LANDON

The answer is "zero"!

The class BURSTS WITH LAUGHTER.

MR. BRAUN

Wrong again, Landon.

(sighs)

I need an Advil.

He exits the class.

LANDON
(to the class)
Don't laugh at me! This post says that
every addition problem equals zero!

He pulls out his phone and shows it to the class. CLARK
(10), who sits in front of Valencia, responds.

CLARK
That's stupid! And that kid is stupid for
posting it! Who taught him that?

VALENCIA
He just posted that for clicks. There's
no way he could believe that.

CLARK
Well, I'm gonna retweet it to all my
friends, so we can attack him!

VALENCIA
Yeah, you do that, Clark.

Clark types rapidly on his phone. Valencia fidgets in her
seat, turns to the camera, and breaks the fourth wall.

VALENCIA (CONT'D)
You're probably wondering what a woman
like me is doing here, in this small
desk, sitting with these kids.

Clark turns to her.

CLARK
Huh?

VALENCIA
(to Clark)
I'm not talking to you!

Clark turns back around. Valencia continues speaking to
the camera.

VALENCIA (CONT'D)
It's not like I want to, but at least I'm
acing the class! Look, it all happened
like this...

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY - FLASHBACK

YOUNG Valencia (9) sits with her PARENTS (30's) in front
of the PRINCIPAL (40's) at his desk.

FATHER

So what is it now?

PRINCIPAL

Your daughter here is once again causing a nuisance!

Valencia plays on a hand-held video game.

PRINCIPAL (CONT'D)

Put that away, Valencia!

YOUNG VALENCIA

Almost done!

MOTHER

Valencia!

Valencia SIGHS and puts it down.

PRINCIPAL

She keeps leaving class. How many times can she have "lady problems"? And she's nine!

FATHER

(to mother)

I'm not touching that one.

PRINCIPAL

And look at her grades!

He hands the parents the papers. They flip through them and GASP.

MOTHER

"A-plus?" "A-plus?" "A-plus??"
(indecisive tone)

Valencia...how...could you?

PRINCIPAL

That's right! She can pass these tests in her sleep!

YOUNG VALENCIA

How'd you know?

PRINCIPAL

I don't think Valencia belongs here.

YOUNG VALENCIA

There you go. School sucks. Peace out.

She attempts to leave her seat. Her mother pulls her back down.

PRINCIPAL

I mean that she can excel at the most gifted of gifted schools in Indy, if she applies herself. And I mean that literally. Here.

He hands the father a brochure.

FATHER

What's this?

PRINCIPAL

A brochure for the best school in the city. I'd show you an app on my phone, but this is the 90's.

The Schmitts look at the brochure.

MOTHER

Wow! It's perfect!

FATHER

It's affordable!

YOUNG VALENCIA

It's awesome!

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

VALENCIA (V.O.)

(narrates, in *italics*)

It was booked, so I didn't get in. Somebody forgot to remind me to turn in my application. So I stayed where I was. But with a catch.

Young Valencia walks to the front of the class.

YOUNG VALENCIA

Hello, class. Yes, I'm only 8, and I made it to fifth grade already! Which makes me smarter than you! So don't treat me as...

PENNY WILLIAMS (11) rushes to her and pushes her into some desks.

SFX: SLAM!

YOUNG VALENCIA (CONT'D)

Hey! Where's the teacher?

PENNY

She told me to do it!

Penny walks away.

VALENCIA (V.O.)

(gloomily)

How could I even think about leaving all my wonderful friends behind? By the way, that girl who greeted me was Penny. Remember that name.

INT. ROOM - DAY

VALENCIA (V.O.)

I was able to graduate from high school, a year ahead of schedule, of course. My excellent transcripts got me this nice desk job.

An adult Valencia sits at her desk, in front of her laptop. She wears a business-type top and pajama pants. She nods off and SNORES. MR. MORRIS ADAMS (40's), the manager, calls her name from the laptop.

MR. ADAMS (O.C.)

Schmitt!

Valencia quickly wakes up.

VALENCIA

Yes, sir!

MR. ADAMS (O.C.)

Schmitt, I know you weren't sleeping on the job!

VALENCIA

No, I wasn't, Mr. Adams!

She turns away from her laptop and paints her nails.

VALENCIA (CONT'D)

There must've been something wrong with the connection. I am working from home, you know.

MR. ADAMS (O.C.)

No you're not!

Mr. Adams towers over her. It is revealed that they are both in an office, in Valencia's cubicle. Valencia GASPS.

VALENCIA

But some of our team is. It's important to fit in, you said!

MR. ADAMS

In my office, Schmitt!

VALENCIA

(sighs)

Yes sir.

INT. MR. ADAMS' OFFICE - LATER

Valencia sits in front of Adams' desk.

MR. ADAMS

I'm not supposed to mention this yet, but management is doing some cuts.

VALENCIA

No! I can change!

MR. ADAMS

Your clothes?

VALENCIA

That too!

MR. ADAMS

It has nothing to do with that, anyway. You have the least amount of seniority. Well, you and Ms. Williams.

An adult Penny enters.

PENNY

Thanks for telling me about this job, Valencia! Now I get to stay!

VALENCIA

I didn't tell you, Penny!

PENNY

You told the world! That's what you get for always posting everything!

MR. ADAMS

That's enough, Penny!

VALENCIA

She keeps her job, and I don't? She got here after me! Plus I got more education experience! I even skipped fourth grade!

PENNY

Well, I completed all of my grades, so
you know what you're getting, Mr. Adams.

MR. ADAMS

(to Valencia)

She has a point.

VALENCIA

No! There's gotta be something I can do
about this!

PENNY

(chuckles)

Not unless it's returning to grade
school!

VALENCIA

I'll show you! I'll show all of you!

She storms out.

MR. ADAMS

Wait, didn't she just start her day?

PENNY

(chuckles)

Wow, Morris, how could you ever think of
getting rid of her?

MR. ADAMS

(hushed voice)

Hey! Save that for private! It's "Mr.
Adams" around here.

PENNY

(giggles)

Right, Mr. Morris Adams!

She sashays away.

INT. VALENCIA'S HOUSE - LATER

Valencia dials on her cell phone.

INTERCUT - VALENCIA/CHASE

CHASE (30's) answers his phone.

CHASE

(sighs)

What do you want, Valencia? I'm busy.

VALENCIA

I'm sure you are, Chase.

CHASE

So now you acknowledge that I do stuff!

VALENCIA

Look, Chase, I know that we agreed to separate.

CHASE

"We" meaning, "you"...

VALENCIA

But I need your advice on something.

CHASE

Why's it always me? Talk to your family or something!

VALENCIA

Speaking of that, how is your family? What's your mom up to?

CHASE

Being dead!

VALENCIA

Oh yeah. Sorry.

CHASE

As great as this call is going, I gotta go.

VALENCIA

No, wait! I can't keep my job unless I can prove I'm smart enough!

CHASE

(scoffs)

No comment!

VALENCIA

It's true! That Penny gets to keep hers just because she attended each grade at school and graduated! I'm smart enough and skipped a grade, and I get punished for it!

CHASE

That sucks, Valencia. However, you do have the habit of doing the bare minimum. Maybe that's why you're being let go.

(MORE)

CHASE (CONT'D)

And you always quit things when the going gets tough!

VALENCIA

What? When have I ever done that?

SILENCE. Chase rolls his eyes.

CHASE

Time to hang up now, Valencia!

VALENCIA

Wait!

(sighs)

Chase, I'm sorry that things didn't work out. You didn't deserve the pain I gave you, but I had some growing up to do. Still do, apparently. Anyway, I hope you find someone that makes you happy. I'll always love you. Bye.

She hangs up. Chase shakes his head and smirks.

CHASE

That Valencia.

A LADY, wearing lingerie, approaches him.

LADY

Oh yeah? Why don't you go back to her, then?

She storms away.

CHASE

Aw, honey! You said I could answer the phone!

(grunts)

Damn Valencia!

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Valencia, dressed similar to the children walking down the hallway (jeans, sneakers, etc.), approaches two boys (7), WILTON and GRIFFITH.

VALENCIA

(sighs)

Excuse me, kids, can you tell me where Mr. Braun's classroom is?

WILTON
(to Griffith)
She must be the sub.
(to Valencia)
It's outdoors today! Didn't you get his
agenda?

Valencia looks out the window.

SFX: Thunder CRACKS!

VALENCIA
It's raining out!

GRIFFITH
Great baseball weather. Road trip to a
Cubs game!

VALENCIA
Yeah, right. I'm not even the sub!

WILTON
Well, you're too dressed up to be the
janitor. Unless you're into getting dirty
like that.
(flirtatiously)
Are you?

VALENCIA
Stop that! I'm a...well, one of his
students.

BOYS
What??

SFX: School bell RINGS!

Other students exit. Valencia and the boys remain.

GRIFFITH
I heard of being held back, but...

VALENCIA
It's not like that!

WILTON
Now, now, ma'am, just because you're
stupid doesn't mean you can't improve!

GRIFFITH
(to Wilton)
Hey, we don't want the stupidity to rub
off on us!

VALENCIA

No kidding! I'll find the class myself!

She exits.

WILTON

Maybe our parents were right! If we don't stay in school, we'll end up looking like her.

GRIFFITH

Is that a bad thing, though? She's kinda hot.

Mr. Braun approaches them.

MR. BRAUN

Hello, gentlemen. Are you enjoying your morning?

GRIFFITH

Yes, Mr. Braun.

MR. BRAUN

How's the temperature in the hallway? Not too hot, not too cold?

WILTON

Uh, it's fine. Thanks for asking!

MR. BRAUN

And the school bell? Is it to your liking?

WILTON

What do you mean?

MR. BRAUN

Were you able to hear it okay?

GRIFFITH

Yeah.

MR. BRAUN

Oh, then in that case...

(bellows)

...get to class!!

The boys run away. Valencia reenters.

VALENCIA

Excuse me, sir, I'm looking for Mr. Braun's class.

MR. BRAUN

Why, is today the audit??

(regular voice)

Not that I'm worried. Or Mr. Braun.

VALENCIA

It's nothing like that. I guess I'm your new student.

MR. BRAUN

What?? But you look like you're my age!

VALENCIA

I know, but I'm trying to save my job!
Even though my no-good co-worker and boss
probably got something going on!

MR. BRAUN

Really?

VALENCIA

But I'm also trying to be more open to
things. I skipped fourth grade, so maybe
it'll be interesting to see what I
missed.

MR. BRAUN

Wow, that's admirable. If we had more
people like you, we would all go back to
grade school!

VALENCIA

Beats "adulthood", I guess.

MR. BRAUN

Well, Ms., or "Mrs."...never had to ask
my students that before...

VALENCIA

"Ms. Schmitt", believe me!

MR. BRAUN

Class is this way. Follow me.

They exit.

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

The students write on their papers. MARGIE (10) whispers
to Valencia.

MARGIE

Psst. Ms. Schmitt, what'd you write for question 8?

VALENCIA

Forget it, Margie. I haven't forgotten you ghosting me at recess.

MARGIE

Sorry, but the swing was finally free!

BRUCE (10) chimes in.

BRUCE

(to Margie)

You don't have to call her "Ms." She's one of us.

VALENCIA

For now. I'm trying to get outta here!

MR. BRAUN

Hey, no talking!

VALENCIA

(to Mr. Braun)

It was them!

BRUCE

So, Valencia, how is adulthood? Better yet, how is, you know, consummation?

WILTON

Ugh, Bruce, you kiss your mother with that mouth?

BRUCE

No. Just yours.

Other students OOOH and SNICKER.

WILTON

Oh, is that right? Well, your mama's head so big, she don't have dreams, she has movies!

Students LAUGH.

BRUCE

Yo mama so old, she was there when God was born!

Students LAUGH.

VALENCIA

Don't let him get to you, Wilton. He's just mad that his mama's feet are so small that she trips over ants!

Students GUFFAW. Valencia and Wilton fist-bump. Mr. Braun approaches them.

MR. BRAUN

That's it! Schmitt, see me after school!

He walks away. The students OOOH.

MARGIE

Lucky you, Valencia!

VALENCIA

What are you talking about?

MARGIE

You get to have him alone!

LANDON

She's right. Why not go after him?

MARGIE

Yeah! You better, before I do!

WILTON

Mr. Braun could probably help you get outta this class, too!

BRUCE

And if not, at least you'll have someone to grow old with.

(pause)

Actually, be old with!

(snickers)

You're so old, yo mama makes old jokes about you!

Students LAUGH. Valencia looks in Braun's direction.

INT. SCHOOL - TEACHERS LOUNGE - LATER

Mr. Braun searches through the refrigerator. Valencia enters.

VALENCIA

Excuse me, Mr. Braun?

MR. BRAUN

(gasps)

Valencia, I meant that I'd meet you in my classroom. Students aren't supposed to be in here!

VALENCIA

I shouldn't be a student, remember?
Besides, I've been in many a teachers lounge before.

She looks around and GASPS.

VALENCIA (CONT'D)

You guys have a bed??

MR. BRAUN

And our own bar. You've never had to teach kids before!

(to bartender)

Hey, Phil.

Phil the bartender waves to him.

MR. BRAUN (CONT'D)

Anyway, you have to set a good example.
The kids are watching you.

VALENCIA

I agree. Why don't we talk more about it over dinner?

MR. BRAUN

That sounds nice, but I don't date students.

VALENCIA

But I'm...

BOTH

...not a student.

VALENCIA

How 'bout this: I'll be at Chez Paco at 7. If you see me there, cool.

MR. BRAUN

See you there?

VALENCIA

Yeah, because it's not a date, right?

MR. BRAUN

Right.

Valencia begins to exit. She passes teacher MR. COREY HUNT (30's), who enters the lounge.

COREY

Hey, who was that? New teacher?

MR. BRAUN

I honestly don't know. But I might have a date with her tonight.

COREY

But we're supposed to go to the gym!

MR. BRAUN

I know, Corey.

COREY

But the girl with the big butt might be on the treadmill in front of us!

MR. BRAUN

I'll take a rain check this time! I don't get asked out very often! Now I have a chance to impress her, take her someplace private.

COREY

Take her up to a White Sox game. You'll have all the privacy you need there!

Corey LAUGHS. Mr. Braun MOCKINGLY LAUGHS.

MR. BRAUN

Seriously, why shouldn't I go for it? I'm not getting any younger.

COREY

Gimme a break. You and me are still young.

Another teacher, TAHRONDA (20's), enters.

TAHRONDA

Hey, Tucker, I thought you had your colonoscopy today.

MR. BRAUN

(scoffs, chuckles)

Let's weigh the odds: colonoscopy or first date?

Tahronda and Corey chuckle and exit. Braun stops chuckling.

MR. BRAUN (CONT'D)
Seriously, colonoscopy or first date?

He sits and ponders.

MR. BRAUN (CONT'D)
Sheesh. I didn't become a teacher to
think!

INT. VALENCIA'S CAR - EVENING

Valencia, wearing a dress and makeup, drives down the street.

VALENCIA
(singsongy voice)
Got a date, got a date...

SFX: Police siren BLARES!

A police car follows Valencia. She pulls over. A male COP approaches her car.

COP
You know why I stopped you?

VALENCIA
I was driving the speed limit! I'm trying to be more responsible these days! Not even under the influence this time! Or ever.

COP
I ran your license plates. You have a lot of parking tickets.

VALENCIA
Oh, that was my ex. I got the car in the divorce. He should've gotten the tickets.

COP
Then you won't mind if I run your driver's license.

Valencia hands him her license.

VALENCIA
Oh, come on, officer, I'm gonna be late for a date! Do you know how long it took me to shave, and how quickly it'll grow back?

COP

Save that mystery for another day. I'll be right back.

VALENCIA

You should call Chase, too, but good luck with that. I've been trying to ask him if I should go on this date, but we keep getting disconnected.

The cop exits.

VALENCIA (CONT'D)

Aw, man, I hope it's quick!

MOMENTS LATER

The cop is in his car. Valencia's license is on the dashboard. The cop texts on his phone.

COP

(speaks amorously while
typing)

What are you gonna do to me when you see me?

(reads aloud)

"I'm not a teller, I'm a shower"?

(pause)

She must mean, "show-er".

MOMENTS LATER

VALENCIA

Oh, I'm gonna be late!

She dials on her cell phone. A WOMAN answers on the other end.

WOMAN (O.C.)

WNDY.

VALENCIA

Hi, first time caller, long time listener! Whoop, whoop!

(pause)

Aren't you gonna show me some love?

WOMAN (O.C.)

This ain't a call-in show. It's not a show at all! I'm the receptionist!

VALENCIA

Oh. Anyway, let me ask you: I'm stuck in fourth grade, and I haven't had sex in years. Should I flee from this cop and hurry to my date?

(pause)

Hello?

She hangs up.

VALENCIA (CONT'D)

Maybe my phone needs an update.

The cop returns. He hands Valencia her license.

VALENCIA (CONT'D)

So everything checked out?

COP

Yeah, let's go with that.

VALENCIA

Good!

She ZOOMS away.

COP

Hey!

He grabs his phone from his pocket and speaks on it.

COP (CONT'D)

Anyway, honey, have you seen my Whole Ass Deodorant?

(frowns)

No, keep it!

INT. CHEZ PACO - LATER

Mr. Braun sits at the table and looks at his watch.
Valencia rushes to him.

MR. BRAUN

Hey! I thought you stood me up!

VALENCIA

It wasn't my fault! It was my ex-husband's, as usual! I got pulled over!

MR. BRAUN

It's okay. I've been looking around the restaurant, taking in the scenery, listening to Keyshia Cole's "Love" in the background.

VALENCIA

Oh. I hate that song.

MR. BRAUN

Yeah, me too.

She sits.

VALENCIA

You must be starving!

MR. BRAUN

Yeah, but not because of that. I was supposed to have my colonoscopy today.

VALENCIA

(gasps)

What? Why didn't you go?

MR. BRAUN

Because a date with you is more worth it!

VALENCIA

Already saying the right things!

MR. BRAUN

Let's look at the menus.

They both do so.

LONG SILENCE.

VALENCIA

Ever been here before?

MR. BRAUN

Nope. First time.

VALENCIA

Oh.

They read the menus.

LONG SILENCE.

MR. BRAUN

I heard the Hoosiers' soccer coach is part-owner here.

VALENCIA

Oh. I'm a Purdue girl myself.

MR. BRAUN

Really? Alma mater?

VALENCIA

No. Just a fan. But I did enroll there once.

MR. BRAUN

Oh.

They continue reading.

LONG SILENCE.

MR. BRAUN (CONT'D)

Menu's nice and clean. Not sticky, or...

VALENCIA

So how long is this date?

MR. BRAUN

It can end now!

They both SIGH in relief.

VALENCIA

Sorry to put you through this, Tucker, I mean, "Mr. Braun".

MR. BRAUN

It's alright, Ms. Schmitt. And don't worry. I'll help you get your job back, or at least get you out of my class.

VALENCIA

Thank you.

MR. BRAUN

If you don't mind, I'm gonna go home. There's still time to drink that nasty broth!

VALENCIA

See you at school tomorrow!

Braun exits. Valencia GASPS.

VALENCIA (CONT'D)

Oh no, he's not gonna leave me with the bill!

She looks around, then slowly gets up. She sneakily heads for the exit. A WAITRESS approaches her.

WAITRESS

You didn't even order yet, ma'am, so you don't have to...

VALENCIA

Hey, look!

Valencia points to the right. The waitress looks in that direction. Valencia sprints out. The waitress SIGHS.

INT. SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Mr. Braun walks down the aisles and passes each student a paper. Valencia and the other students chat.

CLARK

So, Valencia, did you go out with ol' Teach?

BRUCE

Yeah, are we gonna have a little one join our class soon?

WILTON

(to Bruce)

That would be years from now, stupid! Then again, you'll probably still be here.

VALENCIA

No. We're gonna keep it professional.

MARGIE

(to Valencia)

It's just as well, 'cuz Mr. Braun said he has the hots for me!

VALENCIA

He most definitely did not say that, Margie!

(to the camera)

Stay tuned.

MR. BRAUN

(to the class)

And another thing: stop writing, "Stay tuned", for your essay questions! I'm not saying any names...Ms. Schmitt!

He cuts his eyes at Valencia. She looks away.

THE END