

The Cord From Hell

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FADE IN:

INT. MR. MORGAN'S CLASSROOM - DAY

MR. MORGAN, an imposing teacher with a beard and button-up shirt, is presenting to a group of attentive students. They sit on the edge of their seats and are captivated by his presentation. He is clearly something of a heroic presence in the eyes of his class.

EMMA, a bright-eyed student, scribbles down notes; TAYSSA, a scrupulous student, studies the board; MIKE, an intense student, sharpens his extra pencil; and LIAM, a relaxed student, watches the presentation.

Mr. Morgan clicks his laser pointer and the slide of his presentation switches. He is teaching a lesson on figurative language, and he walks up and down in front of his desk like an army sergeant.

MR. MORGAN

Now, for those of you who don't know, figurative language is-

Mr. Morgan sees Mike's hand raised and he pauses.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Mike, do you have a question?

MIKE

Mr. Morgan, isn't there an 'o' in onomatopoeia?

Mr. Morgan glances at the botched word on his slide. He turns to Mike and tilts his head in a patronizing way.

MR. MORGAN

I'm trying to help you out as a writer, Mike. Class, please, save your questions for important matters.

Mike nods, disappointed.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Now, as I was saying-

Just then, the phone rings as Mr. Morgan's eyebrows raise.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Class: sit tight, I need to take this call.

Mr. Morgan reaches for the phone. The cord jounces and wobbles the phone, and Mr. Morgan has to use all his concentration to grapple it.

EMMA

Need some help?

MR. MORGAN

No, thanks, Emma, I'm fine, this is nothing. I've got this.

He finally resorts to awkwardly bending his neck to the receiver since the cord is unrelenting.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Hello? Morgan, here.

He only hears the dial tone.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Argh!

LIAM

Mr. Morgan, what's the matter?

MR. MORGAN

Stupid phone; cord wont work.

Mr. Morgan exhales and straightens his outfit and hair before turning back to the class.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Right, then, let's get on with our lesson, shall we?

The class beams and pens are uncapped.

Mr. Morgan has just opened his mouth to speak when the phone rings again. His eyes dart towards it and he snatches the phone up off the receiver. This time, the cord is ready for him and-as if possessed by the devil-it whips and tangles around his arms.

TAYSSA

Mr. Morgan, you okay there?

MR. MORGAN

I know what I'm doing-just this  
cursed phone cord, it's-it's.  
Ughh!

He struggles against the rubber cords and finally resorts to using his head to hold the phone. He clears his throat and recomposes his face.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Hello?

Dial tone.

Just then, MS. NOTTEBART, a young teacher from Mr. Morgan's department, pops her head in the classroom door and smiles.

MS. NOTTEBART

Hey, Mr. Morgan, are you coming-  
you got the call, right?-

She stops and takes in his situation.

MS. NOTTEBART (CONT'D)

-Oh gosh, need some help?

MR. MORGAN

Oh yeah, of course I got the  
call. I'll be right there.

MS. NOTTEBART

Alright then. Bye-bye.

Emma looks back at Mr. Morgan and narrows her eyes, taking in his cord-bound arms.

EMMA

Mr. Morgan, what's going on?

Mr. Morgan replaces the phone on its holder, and turns to the class with a satisfied face like he is about to share some fundamental truth with his students.

MR. MORGAN

Emma, look, here's the thing:  
you can never let em see you  
sweat. They'll call back, just  
wait.

The phone rings.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

See! I told you! They're calling  
back right now. Of course, I  
knew they would.

It's all a mess, the cord is tangled everywhere and Mr.  
Morgan can hardly touch it because of the cord's defenses.

He lifts up the tangled cord and the phone as if he is  
about to either take the call or smash the lot of it  
against the floor.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Hello? Someone there?

MIKE

Mr. Morgan, its upside down.

Mr. Morgan winks and waves his hand at Mike like he already  
knew. He quickly flips the phone the right way.

MR. MORGAN

Yes?

INT. BAKALE'S ROOM - DAY

MR. BAKALE, a classy Latin teacher, sits at his desk. His  
feet are on the desk and he is scowling like he is hangry.

MR. BAKALE

Hi, can I get a delivery please?  
Uh...I want a cheese and pep-

INT. MR. MORGAN'S ROOM - DAY

MR. MORGAN

(spluttering)  
What? It's Mr. Morgan!

MR. BAKALE

Oh, sorry. My bad.

Mr. Morgan's nostrils flare.

MR. MORGAN

Wrong. Number.

He slams the phone back down on the receiver.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Ah! The hell with this!

LIAM

What are you going to do now?

MR. MORGAN

It's fine. I'll get the call.  
They'll call me back.

The phone rings again.

Mr. Morgan gently lifts the phone ever so slightly, taking care to not disturb the cords. He puts his head up close to the mess. Finally, he grabs the phone and tries to listen.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Gah!

The cords seize him and tangle around his arms.

Ms. Nottebart is walking back past the doorway, so she pops her head in the door frame again.

MS. NOTTEBART

Hey, Morgan, you gotta hurry it  
up. You know where to go, right?

Mr. Morgan shoves the tangle of cords behind his back and smiles tightly at Ms. Nottebart.

MR. MORGAN

Yeah, I'm right on that, don't  
worry.

Ms. Nottebart waves and continues down the hall.

Once she's out of the room, Mr. Morgan begins prying the cords off his arms. He places the phone set back down on his desk.

EMMA

Mr. Morgan, you shouldn't lie.

Mr. Morgan turns and crosses his arms.

MR. MORGAN

No, no, sometimes its okay. Like  
I told you: never let 'em see  
you sweat!

EMMA

(shrugs)

Okay.

MR. MORGAN

Now: figurative writing, class.  
Someone raise their hand and  
tell me the first step in  
writing a-

The phone rings again. Everyone freezes.

Mike, Liam, Tayssa, and Emma exchange a look.

Mr. Morgan's eyes lock onto the phone amid its tangled  
cord. He looks at his expectant class and swallows.

He pounces on the phone and stabs the answer button.  
However, the cord springs up and the phone bounces from his  
hand.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

(slowed down)

Noooo...

Mr. Morgan's hands reach out as the phone clatters to the  
ground. He grimaces and lunges after it pushing aside books  
and desks in his pursuit.

The phone keeps bouncing away and the cord whips viciously  
around. The cord and the phone tumble under the desk.

The students are all watching on the edge of their seats as  
Mr. Morgan follows after it.

Finally, Mr. Morgan snatches the cord and pulls the phone  
towards him.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

I've got you now.

He holds the phone up to his head, breathing heavy, eyes  
wild but triumphant.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Yes, hello??

Just dial tone.

Mr. Morgan seethes and grits his teeth.

MR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Clearly this phone is hell-bent  
on messing me up!

MIKE

Wait, hey, that was  
personification!

Mr. Morgan breaks out into a smile.

MR. MORGAN

Precisely. And that concludes  
our lesson.