Angels or Demons in Disguise

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OVER the past few years, my idea of the perfect student-teacher relationship has changed. I guess one could call it a rather unpleasant transformation. Being the offspring of parents who are both in the teaching business, I assumed that life would simply be a bed of roses for me just as it is for the children of businessmen who are usually and eventually liked by other businessmen although only purely for profit reasons.

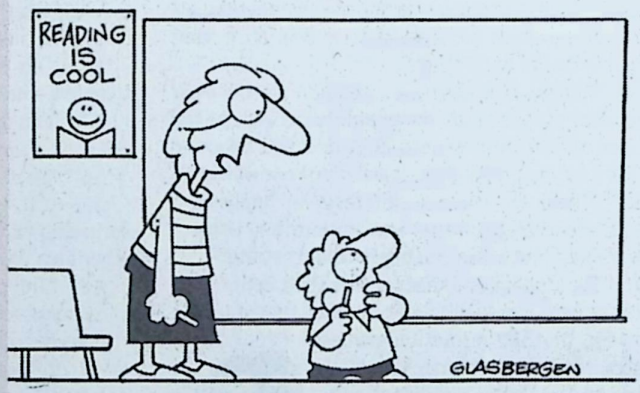
However, I miscalculated my position once again! Who was I kidding? Education is no soap or cigarette selling; it is much more than that. I learnt this valuable lesson in life while in 9th grade, when a sudden phone call changed everything for me. The call was from my school informing my parents about a certain condition I had developed called "flunking"- also known as failing in layman's terms. I successfully mastered to achieve an F in my Physics midterm. Hence, my teacher decided to take the painless measure of letting my parents know. It all went downhill from there. My report card never reconciled with its previous self- the marginally obtained 90% in the finals which had been very consistent since grade 8.

Vengeance flooded my veins and arteries, more than biology or chemistry did. I began to view my classroom as a battlefield and my peers as soldiers and knights from King Arthur's time and my teachers as the Saxons. A whole new war had begun for me and this war I had to fight for the next three years till I graduated High School. In the past, I used my sly smile and exceptional abilities of "buttering" teachers to get the desired grade but it all seemed futile. So, I had to use my head tactically to finish each one off as neatly as possible and also in the alphabetic order of the seven subjects I had taken.

In the end, I did finish them off! I got exceptional grades in the mock exams taken before my IGCSE exams and I aced every single one of them. However, my battle seemed fruitless to me, because I realized I overworked myself for something that would just prove to the concerned authorities that I was not another dumb student in the midst of several dumb students. I wanted to prove that I was intelligent and, having done so, I was more than satisfied. So I relaxed, let my guard down and lost the battle instincts I instilled in me following that one phone call. The consequence was that I did worse than I expected in the actual exam. I did not take my teacher's concern for my bad grades in a positive light but rather I viewed it as a means for her to vilify me. This foolish perception fueled my anger and bruised my ego resulting in me working temporarily to prove my point to my teachers. In the long run, I not only let my teachers down, I also let my parents down.

So what is the moral of my story? It is that teachers will always get in your way and try to push you around not because it gives them some kind of a sadistic pleasure but, rather because they want the best for their students. They hound their students for their own good, to make them a better scholar and to implant in them the drive to reach perfection Every time a student gets an F a teacher sees a reflection of his/her failure in nurturing his/her students. It makes the teacher wonder where he/she went wrong and why a certain pupil got that grade. Teachers were once students and students will one day be teachers and when they do become one, they will realize that they possess a beautiful gift - the gift of imparting knowledge - a gift solely for benefit.

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"There aren't any icons to click. It's a chalk board."