

Everyday Confrontations

Simon Doesn't Have a Pencil

Scene #1

Simon entered his first period history class and took his seat in the front row, closest to the door. Simon generally does not like school and although his grade in history is a D, he does like his teacher who keeps things light and gives him more attention than his other teachers who generally ignore him. Simon typically enters the room and jokes with the teacher about his clothes or about a sporting event the night before. On this morning however, Simon is not in the joking mood or a history lesson and does not want to be bothered. He has not told anybody, but last night his father came home very angry and got physical with him and his mother. Simon did not get any sleep and is now worried about his mother. On this day Simon enters the classroom, sits down, and doesn't say anything. The teacher was not at his door this morning and did not see Simon enter.

Scene #2

A few minutes into class, the teacher notices that Simon has his hood up, is slouched in his seat, is staring straight ahead, and is not completing the entrance ticket. Simon is not a great student, but he usually completes the entrance ticket albeit with little interest or effort. From the other side of the room where his desk is, the teacher asks Simon why he is not completing the ticket. Simon never looks at the teacher and responds quietly and bluntly that he does not have a pencil.

The teacher responds by saying, "Come on! You don't know how to solve that problem?" "Even a fourth grader could figure out how to get a pencil!" On most days, this would not have been an issue with Simon, but this was not most days.

Scene #3

Simon responded to the sarcasm from the teacher by saying "whatever" angrily under his breath while staring straight ahead with a menacing look. The teacher was embarrassed and disrespected in front of the class and responded by asking "What did you say"? followed by "You could easily just ask me or a classmate for a pencil but instead you are going to sit there and pout over not having a pencil?".

Simon responded by saying F**** you and slamming his desk with his fists in anger! The teacher walked towards him quickly, stood in front of Simon's desk and said, "get in the hallway". Once in the hallway, the teacher stood close to Simon and asked what his problem was. Simon responded by saying "you are my f****ing problem". At this point the teacher felt nervous about their own lack of control and told the student to go to the office.

Scene #4

Once in the office, Simon continued to be obstinate and was now yelling and threatening adults to the point where the School Resource Officer had to be called. Despite being approached by a uniformed police officer, Simon only upped his antics and threatened that he was going to go after the officer's gun and took a step towards him.

The officer had to restrain Simon who at this point was thrusting around the floor and a threat to himself and others. This went on until Simon was picked up by an ambulance for an involuntary

emergency mental health examination. When the teacher watched the ambulance drive off and was informed what happened, he felt a bad for Simon and a sense of guilt for the role he played in escalating his behavior.