

Question5: It was the middle of the mathematics class. Mrs Taylor our teacher suddenly collapsed and sprawled unconscious on the floor. It was terrifying.

Write a story which includes these words.

This story is based on Question 5 above.

GRASPING DEATH

I had never been to a funeral before, as at the age of six my parents thought death was too difficult a topic for me to grasp. I've heard of them though, dark, long trails of cloth glided along the bodies of weeping women who covered their red eyes with black netted hats. Then, they have a big party; I know this for myself because I stayed home when my grandpapi died when I was four. I was told to stay in my room, but the sound of the steelpan floated through my window. My granpapi was a pan teacher you see, and from then, I associated death with black clothes and party. What was sad about a party?

It was in the middle of the Mathematics class. Mrs Taylor our teacher suddenly collapsed and sprawled unconscious on the floor. It was terrifying. The chalk she held in her hand scraped against the chalkboard making her incorrectly tell us that $2+3=1$. We sat there. None of us, being the naïve kindergarteners we were, understood this dire situation. Mrs Taylor's pretty hair lay knotted around her pretty face and blood seeped through her pretty pants.

"Mrs Taylor! Mrs Taylor!" we finally cried.

She did not move. She never slept during our scheduled naptime, so why would she sleep now.

The blood continued to run, as Corey, the oldest boy in our class ran to his mother, the Principal. Madam Collins ran into our class, but stopped abruptly at the door.

"Oh dear me," she whispered.

She pulled her cell phone from her pocket and called the police. After, she called Mr Taylor.

"Mr Taylor," Madam Collins said in her most professional voice, "Mrs Taylor has collapsed. I believe there is something wrong with the baby."

I had never seen a man cry either. Mr Taylor worked in the high school division of my school and he ran faster than the Olympians to my classroom.

"Maria! Maria!" he cried.

She was somewhat awakened by the shout, but she shook violently as spasms overtook her body. I think she shouted "help me," in Spanish, before she went back to sleep.

The ambulance drove through the gate and Mr Taylor took Mrs Taylor outside even before the ambulance parked. He shouted and screamed when they denied him entry and he drove with Madam Collins to the hospital.

Ms Lassie, the school nurse, came into our classroom and told us that Mrs Taylor would be okay. She gave us lollipops – the ones you get when you fell down the stairs, and she read 'The Cat in the Hat' to us.



Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate®

May/June 2010 English A Examination

Best Short Story

Written by

Zoie Hamilton

of

**Washington Archibald High School
St Kitts and Nevis**

Mrs Taylor didn't come back the next day, or the day after. They continued to give us lollipops. Five days after the accident they told us that Mrs Taylor was not coming back to school. That God had taken her to dance on the streets of gold. We laughed because we all knew that Mrs Taylor couldn't dance and we wondered why God would make such a bad decision.

Two days after, they told our parents to dress us in black and send us to school. Mama didn't want to let me, but I begged and pleaded. We hardly got to wear our own clothes to school.

I wore my long black dress to school that day. In the afternoon, we walked to a big bus and went to St Mary's Church. There were women in black walking through the aisles crying. Mr Taylor sat in the back whispering to himself.

"Do you see that big box?" Madam Collins asked, "Do not go by it."

When she turned her back, we ran to the box and saw Mrs Taylor lying in it. We instantly became one of the weeping persons.

I've yet to understand the party of a funeral, but I'm positive my family didn't like my grandpapi.