

CHAPTER 1

Q4 - Whatever happened to the dinosaurs?

Monday

It doesn't matter how long I have been doing this job (actually this is only my 4th year), Monday mornings are always the worst. Whatever happened to the weekend? It is as if it had never existed, a figment of my overactive imagination. Of course, in reality, it is a question of ratio. Anytime you have a 5:2 ratio you are always going to feel short changed. You spend five days waiting for two. No wonder the two feels a lot shorter than the five, IT IS! Yet invariably on a Monday morning, as I greet my colleagues and ask them how their weekends were, they reply "Too short."

By dinner time I was in need of a weekend. Year 9 had been hard work as usual. They'd come in like a football crowd descending from the terraces after a last-minute winning goal. Something had clearly kicked off in their first lesson, as they were about as high as a kite which had been attached to a NASA shuttle and launched into outer orbit. It took me 6 attempts just to get through the register.

If there is one thing I was taught during my training it was always insist on silence to do the register, no matter how long it takes. It's about control. If you fail to establish it from the start, then you will never have it. I don't think my mentor envisaged it taking the 17 minutes it did today mind you. In the end I went down the names as quickly as possible to ensure that I made it to the end before someone shouted out, started giggling or quacked like a duck (don't ask).

They did eventually get some work done, exploring the concept of prayer. I had intended on getting them to sit and quietly reflect at the start of the lesson. I soon had to shelve that. Instead they wrote a school prayer. Well, if I am honest, they half wrote a prayer, I had to fill in the other half (or two thirds). They really weren't in the mood to focus. Sometimes even the best planned lessons go wrong, and this certainly wasn't the best planned lesson.

Year 9 are, for the record, not my favourite class. If I were to put my classes in order they would end up on the bottom of the pile, well below the rest. In fact, as far down the scale as it would be possible to go. If Yorkshire County Cricket Club represent the top of the list, they would be a local village team. Not a quaint idyllic village mind you but one filled with really annoying people who think they are good enough to play for England but aren't. In particular there are three main characters. Tom, Tom and Tom. No, I am not having a senior moment or about to launch into a nursery rhyme, there really are three Toms and they're all equally as challenging.

They were the ones who came in chanting, the ones who wouldn't focus on the task and the ones who kept quacking during the register. I am sure they have many good qualities; I am just yet to discover them.

Ever since the first day they walked (or in Tom P's case 'fell') through my door they have been a challenge. Now I don't want you to think that I am some wet behind the ears, sheltered teacher who has no backbone and can't control a few delinquent teenagers for a mere hour. I can be pretty tough when I want to be, it's just it seems to have little impact on these 3. Set a detention and they don't turn up, get them removed from lessons and they almost celebrate it. It's the effect they have on the others in the group that is the real issue. They are like a giant pond magnet, sucking the little fish towards them. Yes, ok so that wasn't the best analogy in the world, I appreciate that fish are not magnetic, at least not the ones you get in a typical pond, but I am sure you catch my drift. If I am going to be the next Head of Department, I need to demonstrate that I can beat Year 9 into submission so that by the end of July they will not only love my lessons but will work hard

without being prompted. In the meantime, however we aren't close to being there, so strong coffee will have to do.

Eventually the bell went. They had been such hard work that I didn't even bother to remind them to tuck their chairs in or leave a row at a time. I let them tumble out, now they were someone else's problem.

Fortunately, after dinner and a 3rd cup of coffee (I really should invest in some decaf), I had Year 10. They are a very different kettle of fish, to continue my aquatic themed imagery.

Year 10 are the Dream Team, move aside Pele and Brazil's 1970 Football World Cup winning team, don't even think about the 2015 All Blacks with their back-to-back Rugby World Cups and forget about the 1992 Olympics USA Basketball Team. My Year 10's are the real thing. Firstly, they all chose to study the subject when they selected their GCSE options. This helps a lot as it means they actually want to learn. Secondly, they are just really fun to teach, though our lessons don't always go to plan.

Today was no exception.

"Sir I don't get it." An interesting start, there was no clarification from the speaker, a rather strongly opinionated young lady in the front row by the name of Michelle F, as to what 'it' was. She seemed annoyed with me as I waited for further information. It wasn't forthcoming.

"What is IT?"

Michelle looked confused, "Pardon?"

"IT, what is IT?" I repeated my question, maybe a little unhelpfully. I was getting frustrated. It wasn't rocket science, it wasn't even simple science.

"Are you talking about sex sir?" the girl asked, a large frown now sharing her sour look.

Where had that come from? "I don't know what I am talking about, you said you don't get it, I asked what it is, and now we seem to have moved off the beginnings of the universe to human reproduction," I explained.

Understanding dawned on her face, like the first rays of the morning sun, though a lot slower.

"Dinosaurs, sir, what happened to the dinosaurs?"

I like to play question bingo. I have a list you see of the 21 most commonly asked questions. These aren't your spur of the moment questions or your 'can I go to toilet' type. No these are the big hitters, the crème de la crème. These are the sort of questions that wear tailored Armani suits and handmade Santoni shoes. They are the questions which are asked every year with alarming regularity. I like to keep track of them, to see which classes get a full house or which asks the most. I know what you are thinking, not the most exciting pastime but then if you think that, you clearly aren't an RS teacher. This is about as good as it gets.

Today's question is one of the big hitters, a top ten entry. Yes, I have even listed them in order of occurrence and today comes in at number 4. The 4th most asked question of my professional career if you can ignore, why do we have to do homework, is it the end of the lesson yet and why did you want to become a teacher, couldn't you get a proper job? The 21 questions are all specific to Religious Studies.

Anyway, 'Whatever happened to the dinosaurs?' is not only the 4th most asked question but also possibly my favourite.

Interestingly, of course, the students who ask this rarely want to know what happened to the dinosaurs. In fact, when I do choose to take a literal interpretation of their question and talk at length about giant comets or turning into birds and the other possible explanations for their extinction, which I have mainly learnt from Jurassic park, they normally look at me as if I have gone mad. No, the question actually has very little to do with giant lizards.

Instead, it is about the creation of life on this planet, and it is generally a loaded question. On the one hand we have the likes of Christian K who is a disciple of science. On the other hand, the likes of William L-K for whom the book of Genesis holds all the explanation he needs.

I made a promise to myself, when I started 21 question bingo, never to ignore one of them. So, with that in mind I took a deep breath, and I opened it up for debate, after all 'you only live once', well maybe twice but definitely once, at least you do if you are a dinosaur and for millions of years.

Turns out dinosaurs didn't even live once, they are a test, well their bones are anyway, put there as a trial of our faith. It was an interesting opening gambit from William and one that I knew was not going to win over the neutrals.

Christian on the other hand had a prop and wasn't afraid to use it. He started waving his science textbook around, almost taking his partner's eye out as he condemned any anti-scientific views as akin to social subjugation. I think he has been reading Marx again.

William, backed by a few muttering but less courageous members of the group did not react well to his deeply entrenched religious beliefs being linked to some form of political oppression. So the argument continued.

It was at least civil until a shout of "You're just an ignoramus," silenced the room. It had started to move away from an intellectual debate and more into the realms of a slanging match. Christian had thrown the first punch.

Dudley R raised his hand; he had clearly been keeping up with the debate despite not joining in so far. I stopped William from retorting by calling upon Dudley to speak.

"Is that a kind of dinosaur?" Well that stopped the debate in its tracks.

"Is what a dinosaur?"

"An ignominosaurus or whatever he said." Turned out Dudley was not quite keeping up as closely to the debate as I had presumed.

"No idiot," I replied.

"Sir you can't call Dudley an idiot." Michelle F jumped to his defence. Where had that come from? I rewound what I had said in my mind and then realised what it might have sounded like.

"No, no, no, I wasn't talking about Dudley, I was referring to Christian."

"I am not an IDIOT either." Christian shouted.

At this point I started to panic a little, the last thing I wanted was a complaint that I had called a student an idiot.

"I didn't..." I stammered, trying to get a grip on my words.

"Sir is right, you are one." William shouted, not really helping matters.

Michelle hadn't finished chastising me. "I heard it, you called Dudley an idiot and he's not, he is really clever." After she said this, she gave Dudley a smile. He certainly didn't seem upset that his intelligence had been questioned, in fact the opposite, he had an inane grin on his face.

Things were getting out of hand, so I considered my options.

After a few seconds, just enough time to gather what few thoughts I had left, I raised my hands for silence. Many classes would have ignored me, but this wasn't many classes, these were my favourites, and they paused to listen to my sage words.

"No one is an idiot; it was just a misunderstanding. I was simply explaining what the word Christian used actually meant. A word, Christian, that shouldn't be used against another student. OK?" I paused, there was some nodding, some looks of confusion and one student, Martin G, staring out the window, clearly not interested in anything that was going on in the classroom. "So no-one is to call anyone names, there are no idiots in this room."

Michelle raised her hand one last time. "There's still Christian, he's an absolute t..." She never got her chance to say what he was, but I was pretty sure it would have been quite rude. At that point I leapt in, not physically, I'm not really a leaper.

"Right, so that's enough of the dinosaurs." I attempted to end the conversation.

“That’s probably what God said.” Desiree cut in. She may have felt this was helpful, it wasn’t. At exactly the same time William shouted, “They never existed,” and Christian bellowed, “He doesn’t exist.” I think he was referring to God rather than William, but who knows? Fortunately and to my utter relief a louder noise drowned them both out. It was the bell. I was saved.

By the time I got home, I sat down on the sofa and fell asleep. One day and already I was exhausted. I woke when my two housemates came into the room arguing about whether Call of Duty 4 was better than Grand Theft Auto 5. Neither of them have proper jobs and so their world is full of such important discussions.

Neither of them noticed I was there and fortunately didn’t engage me in their conversation. Instead, I went to get some tea. After tea it was 8pm and I went to bed. 8pm!!!! Tomorrow will be easier, Tuesday always is. As I lay in bed, I put a DVD on, Jurassic Park, what else could it be?

Tuesday

Arrived early today, made myself a coffee and took it to my classroom to get set up for the day. I am sure you are picturing a beautifully clean and well-proportioned room, with rows of gleaming desks, inspiring displays on the walls and perhaps a gown hanging proudly in the corner. If so, you have never been to my room. For one thing the walls have a series of holes in them, the windows don’t close properly (even in winter) and the storage heaters seem to have forgotten how to store heat. The chairs look tired and the desks have seen better days (especially if you take a look at the social history of chewing gum which marks the underside). All in all this is not the finest example of a classroom. It is a mobile, a portacabin, a temporary ruin put in place when the school outgrew its existing buildings and then left in place like a forgotten relic from a previous age.

By the time I had Year 10 again, later in the afternoon, my room was also resembling something Steven Spielberg could have used for the opening scenes of Saving Private Ryan. There was chaos everywhere, I even found a half-eaten sandwich proudly taking up a seat on the back row, next to a packet of Quavers and three Liquorice Allsorts – unfortunately they were the blue ones. So for the start of the lesson I enlisted the class to help tidy up. They were not too pleased and chuntered about slave labour and human rights.

Afterwards I got them to feed back on the homework task I had set them, to find five examples of modern miracles. This immediately cheered them up, you should have seen what they came up with.

We had amputated legs growing back, curing cancer, visions of Mary and even a woman in Wyoming who found the face of Jesus on a slice of toast. We did get a bit distracted at this point as we engaged in a lengthy debate on how easy or hard it would be to fake Jesus’ face on toast. To settle things I set them a challenge to try and do so at home. Doubt they will actually do it.

I came out of that lesson with an actual smile on my face remembering what I enjoy most about the job.

Later, before I went to sleep, I googled Jesus on toast. Wow, who’d have thought there were so many entries. However, what shocked me was that you can actually buy Jesus toasters.

Wednesday

Went to make myself breakfast but couldn’t stomach another bowl of tasteless bland cereal so ended up calling by a coffee shop on my drive in. There are several ones on my way to work but my favourite is a little independent one, *Lord of the beans*.

Firstly, they sell lovely pastries, secondly, they do great coffee and thirdly, they are really friendly and sometimes I get free samples to try when they are experimenting with new recipes. Though if they ever offer me the Chilli Cappuccino again, I may have to find a new establishment. I am sure I can still feel it in the back of my throat, and it has been nearly three months now. Fortunately, I

haven't seen it on the menu since, maybe my demanding three glasses of water and downing them one after another made them realise they had misjudged their product. Today I ordered a flat white and an apricot croissant.

By break time I was hungry again. I'd just had the three Toms. Today, they were better behaved. They did at least sit in their own seats and didn't make animal noises during the register. For the record they aren't the same. Tom P is loud, Tom S is louder, and Tom D makes the school fire alarm seem quiet and timid.

Other than that I am sure they could be twins, except if they were twins, they would at least have different names. Unless you named your children Tom 1, Tom 2 and Tom 3, though that would be cruel.

Before you point it out, yes, I realise I said twins and there are three of them. Fortunately I don't teach Maths. We were continuing our look at prayer by exploring aides to prayer. I'd brought in some rosary beads, a couple of Saints' icons, a crucifix and a rock. The idea was to get them to draw and label the aides whilst getting a firsthand look at them.

Tom D didn't quite see it that way. He drew them, failed to add any labels but managed to split the Rosary, scattering the beads everywhere. By the time he'd picked up all the ones he could find he seemed to think it was hilarious, I didn't. That didn't bother him. Instead he declared that at least they wouldn't have to pray as much next time. I tried to ignore him and get the others to focus on the work but there was very little labelling going on.

At the end of school, I was just leaving my room when my foot slipped on something, sending me forwards, almost into the closed door. For how long am I going to keep finding random beads on my floor?

Anyway, I am not going to think about work anymore. Instead I have football to watch. Sunderland are on TV and already camped out on their own 10-yard line, desperately trying not to concede a goal. Perhaps we could do with some aides to prayer, it might be our only hope of a successful season.

Thursday

Thursday evening is staff meeting evening. It was our first meeting since Tilda had dropped the bombshell. She still hasn't told the rest of the school. Tilda Peak (that's her full name – well actually it is Tilda-Nona Peak, but she tends to drop the second part – I can empathise with this) gave me a slightly withering look as I arrived late. That's about as tough as she gets, she isn't the sort to tell you off, but it works just the same. I felt pretty guilty for the next 5 minutes and tried my best to look alert and enthusiastic.

The agenda was short – one item, marking! Have I mentioned already that marking is up there with my least favourite things to do alongside having to attend weddings of people I barely know and cutting back the huge overgrown leylandii in the garden (which always makes me come out in a rash). She was worried that we were marking our GCSE scripts inconsistently. Some of us, there was no naming names but given the fact there were only three of us in the room the chances of it being me were quite high, were being overly generous in our marks. I nodded, as if I was in full agreement with her sentiment.

Next to me, Oliver coughed a gentle but obvious cough. Why does he do that? Why cough? He's not Dolores Umbridge, though there are some similarities. Oliver, my fellow RS teacher is 6ft 3in, slim, with his hair swept up at the front like Hugh Jackman. He likes to think he is cooler than the rest of us with his Ted Baker suits and Paul Smith shirts. He once told me he had paid £350 for his shoes. They were black, like mine, loafers, like mine, uncomfortable, like mine, yet £303 more expensive than mine.

I know for a fact that he wants Tilda's job too. He was probably the one who persuaded her to retire in the first place. I can imagine him leaving Silversea cruise catalogues all-round the RS office.

He is cunning and slippery and ... ok so I should probably stop there but the truth is we don't get on. He really makes my skin itch, even more so than the inevitable leylandii rash will, when it comes to hacking it back again come spring.

It turned out that Oliver had a plan, of course he did. He always has a plan. I sometimes wonder if he knows in advance what Tilda is going to say. That or he just has a plan for every eventuality. It's not that his plans aren't good, they often are. But he ALWAYS has one and ALWAYS expects us to adopt them.

"We should all mark a few scripts each, the same ones, and then share our marks." He suggested with a faux smile on his face.

Tilda nodded so I had to nod, it wasn't a bad idea. In fact it was a pretty decent one, that was the problem.

"That's a great idea." Tilda lavished praise on him. I mean, it was a good idea, I am not sure it was great.

Oliver then dug his hand into his bag and smugly produced five scripts which he had pre-copied. Of course he had brought some scripts, his scripts, the ones he had already marked.

"You could use some of mine," I said, grabbing my own pile and placing it on the desk. OK so my pile of half crumpled scripts with a large sticker on one saying 'Lost property office, York station, YO24 1AB'. I may have accidently left them on a train last weekend. "I have some really good ones somewhere here." I soon realised I was losing the argument.

"Don't worry Eric," he said putting a patronising hand on my arm, as if trying to help me out of a difficult and awkward situation. "I've already printed out a marking grid for mine." And he had. How does he do it? I sometimes wonder if he is a time traveller, maybe he has already sat through this meeting once before.

I know the Bible is clear, we should love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. However I just wish Jesus had made an exception for tall, irritatingly fit and healthy, wavy haired, know it all RS teachers called Oliver... but sadly he didn't.

I tried to stay calm, as if it really didn't matter. I failed. It did.

I hate Oliver Parks. There I have said it. OK, so maybe hate is too strong a term. I don't want him to come to any actual harm. Well not unless you count being forcibly shipped off to the States and forced to work in one of those diners, selling grits and burgers whilst wearing a grease-stained apron as harm. If only it would happen.

Unfortunately, I had to spend the next 15 minutes marking his scripts. I am sure he deliberately chose ones that were hard to mark. You may be thinking, this should've been easy. I am after all a professional and therefore surely, I can mark a few scripts correctly. The problem is marking essay-based subjects such as RS is not an exact science. It was a tense 15 minutes, I wanted to get this right to prove to Oliver that he was the problem not me.

However, he was again one step ahead, he made me go first in giving feedback. I gave my marks, Tilda gave hers, there were a few differences. I had been a little more generous on the evaluation questions. Then Oliver gave his and what a surprise, they were just the same as Tilda's. Every single mark was the same.

'Another reason why he would make a better Head of Department'. I bet that's what he was thinking. I bet that's what Tilda was thinking. It's also probably what the crow that was sat outside the window and constantly cawing, was thinking. After all it was certainly what I was thinking.

Friday

Today was a good day. My lessons went well but then again; I don't have Year 9 on a Friday.

Met up with a few other teachers in town tonight. It's become a fortnightly tradition. Only eight of us turned up, which is less than usual but enough to have a nice drink. Fortunately, Oliver wasn't one of them, he never comes.

By 10pm, half of them had gone onto a club (I hate clubs, awful music, too loud to think let alone talk, rubbish beer and you have to dance – trust me if you saw me you would understand), two of them had gone ‘home’, they are seeing each other, everyone knows it, even the kids know it but they pretend they are not.

That left me and Gina. To be fair, Gina and I often go for a drink together so it’s no real problem. She teaches Geography, has been at the school a year longer than me and is the person I get on best with in the building. Once the others had gone, I told her all about Oliver.

“Why do you let him wind you up?” She asked, a slight grin daring to nestle in the corner of her mouth.

“WHY?” I wanted to tell her about the job, but Tilda had been firm, no-one else was to know, so instead I went for his irritating personality. I started to rant but she just smiled at me. Gina does that, she tends to laugh at me a lot, but I know she understands really.

After I had calmed down, she told me about her woes, turns out her Head of Department is still making her do half his job. He seems to take the art of delegation to a whole new level. I nodded as she spoke, yes, he sounded like a bit of a slave driver but nowhere near as bad as Oliver Parks. I kept these thoughts to myself.

By the time I was dispatched to the bar to order a fourth pint, well mine anyway, she was on the gin, we had moved onto our most challenging classes. Gina claimed her Year 11’s were the hardest class to teach in school. Of course she didn’t have the three Toms to deal with.

Saturday

I love lists. To be more precise I love Top 5 lists. You know the ones, if you google Top 5 lists on the internet you will find an almost inexhaustible supply of them. I don’t search for them very often, instead I love to write my own. My Top 5 holiday destinations, my Top 5 indie bands, my Top 5 excuses for not handing in homework. You get the picture. It’s not just creating new lists that I enjoy, it’s also updating them, seeing how they change over time. I’ve always enjoyed doing it and it makes for interesting reading, if you are me.

For example I can tell you that my **Top 5 favourite films currently are:**

Rogue One: A Star Wars story

The Empire Strikes Back

Lord of the Rings: Return of the King

The Shawshank Redemption

Star Wars: A New Hope

OK, so I may be a bit obsessed with Star Wars but who isn’t?

The reason I bring it up is that I watched Arrival tonight. I loved the film, though obviously not enough to make my top 5. I did consider extending it to a top 10 in order to fit it in. I then spent a good half an hour trying to work out what else would get in. More Star Wars? Yes. More Lord of the Rings? Yes. Oh and Jurassic Park of course. You can’t have enough dinosaurs. In the end, despite Arrival’s twist of an ending, I decided to stick to a top 5.

Monday

Arrived early, went to see Tilda and offered to organise the Year 7 places of worship visit for her. She looked at me as if I had just announced my plan to singlehandedly row round Great Britain in a homemade canoe. Despite this she accepted, why wouldn’t she, I was taking work off her. I have never organised a visit before mind you, but how hard can it be? Plus, I knew that if I offered to do it then Oliver wouldn’t be able to sneak in and steal my thunder on this one. I think this is 15 – Love to me.

Period 3. Year 9. More Prayer.

Ironically, I said a prayer before I went into the room. I prayed that God would keep me calm, make them work and give the three Tom's a mild cold. Not a serious one, I don't want them properly poorly, I just don't want them in school. Actually, that isn't true, I don't mind them being in school, I just don't want them in my classroom.

I felt bad about the prayer almost as soon as I said it. After all God loves the Toms as much as he loves me and although I am not a hundred percent sure why, I have to accept this and try to love them too.

My efforts lasted for the first 67 seconds at which point Tom P opened the window and yelled something unrepeatably to an unknown victim outside. I shouted at him and told him in no uncertain terms that if he wanted to stay in my lesson he had better start behaving.

He told me he didn't want to stay in my lesson because prayer was boring, so he might as well carry on. I really need to think about what I am saying before I start shouting.

With Year 9 out the way I had my Year 10 'dream team' period 4. I don't want you to get the wrong idea mind you, they are not perfect. Amy P, who is usually one of the best students in the class was in a right mood today. She came in with a face that would sink a thousand ships, scowling like mad and jabbing her finger at a group of boys. Then she put her pen down after 15 minutes and said she couldn't work.

I pointed out she could, she was just choosing not to.

She didn't seem to think this was a particularly clever or witty comment and told me to go away.

We were studying the Incarnation. I was talking through the virgin birth and got a snigger every time I mentioned it (the word virgin that is, they were quite ok with the idea of birth, clearly, they hadn't witnessed one). They are meant to be 14/15 years old! They didn't ALL giggle mind you. Dudley R kept a straight face throughout but did glare at me each time it happened as if it were my fault.

At the end I was about to let them go when suddenly Desiree K pulled a pile of toast out of her bag and proudly laid it on the desk. She wasn't the only one. Three more of the class took out toast and Dudley R sheepishly pulled out a bagel.

"I didn't have any bread," he confessed.

None of them managed to get anything like Jesus on their toast – which is probably a good thing, or they would have tried to sell it on eBay. There were a few faces but that was about it. I say faces but they were more just two dots and a curved line. Then there was the bagel, I mean how he expected Jesus to appear on a bagel I am not sure, it had a huge hole in the middle.

Got my phone out to photograph them. I wondered what would happen if I 'accidentally' sent them to the Head? You know, a 'look how inventive my lessons are' kind of email. You never know with Mrs Elliot, she would either love it and I would score brownie points or hate it, and I would be on some sort of support plan for incompetence and belittling the noble art of teaching. Decided against it. There must be a way to impress her mind you, I just need to find out what it is. I wonder if she likes chocolate.

By the end of the lesson even Amy P was smiling. Well maybe smiling is too strong but she no longer looked like she was going to kill the next person who looked in her direction. She will be fine by next lesson, I am sure.

Wednesday

Coffee shop again! I know I shouldn't, after all teachers' wages are not inexhaustible. The problem is there are a number of fine establishments on my way to work, and I can't just drive past them all, they might be missing me.

I love coffee. All teachers love coffee. It is a staple of any diet. You won't find a staffroom that doesn't have an aroma of freshly brewed beans. Mind you there is also always someone nursing a herbal tea, trying to pretend that they are enjoying it but not me, I love coffee.

What coffee do I like? Well that depends on my mood. Today I decided to be bold and went for a caramel latte with cinnamon sprinkles, luxury in a mug. Instead however I received a small warm Americano with extra milk.

I pointed this out to the gentlemen wearing a 'trainee barista' T-shirt. He just looked at me confused. I wasn't convinced he had realised that there are different types of coffee which come in different sized mugs.

I turned round to see an old man behind me looking as if all his Christmases had come at once. It took me a while to realise why. Instead of a small, milky, weak coffee he had just been introduced to the world of the exotic, he was drinking my caramel and cinnamon flavoured delight. He caught my eye, saw me looking at his coffee, cupped it tightly in both hands and shuffled off as fast as he was able.

The barista on the other hand kept pointing to my receipt, explaining that I had the coffee I had ordered. He was correct but the only problem being that it wasn't my receipt. He had given that, with my coffee, to the now delighted senior gentleman who despite his age was long gone. In the end I gave up and left, I had Year 8 to teach period 1 and couldn't still be in the coffee shop when they arrived on mass.

Friday

End of another week.

Have to admit I am tired tonight. I decided not to go out anywhere.

Instead I went to bed early. It's the weekend which means I can relax and have fun... as well as plan next week's lessons and mark last week's work.