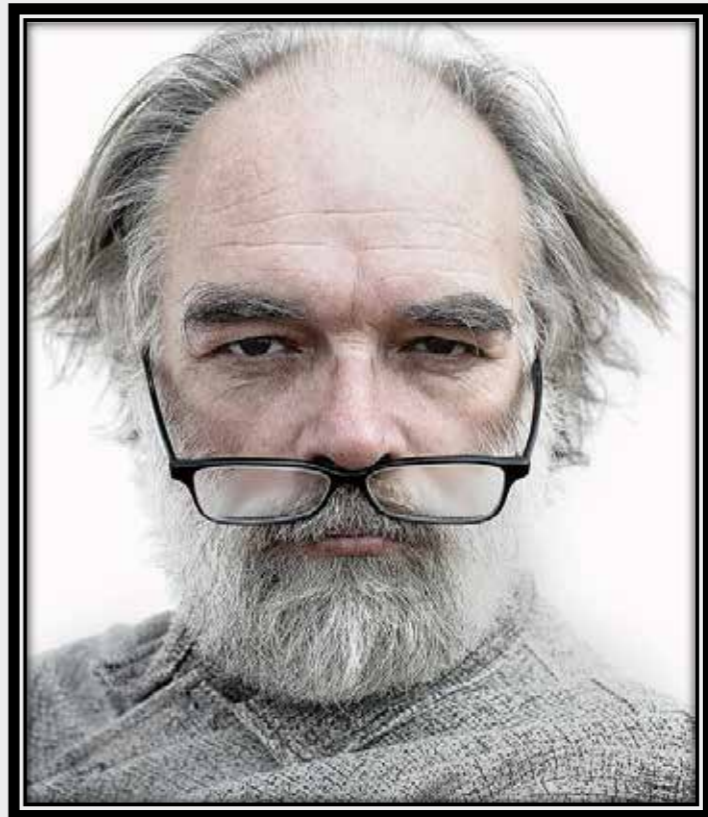


The New Teacher

By Liliana Robinson



The New Teacher

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Chapter 1

There was once a girl named Elizabeth, who was 12. Elizabeth was very beautiful and all the boys in her class fancied her. She had long, black hair and pretty, fluttering eyelashes. She was just the sort of girl you would like to marry.

She was quiet and often got ignored at school. Sometimes she was quite nervous and people thought she was worrying too much.



She went to a school called St Thomas' Secondary. It was dark and miserable-looking. You never really jumped for joy when you saw it.

There was one boy at school who really liked Elizabeth, called Alex. He was the only person she spoke to. Alex was ginger-haired and often picked his nose. He was kind but was really naughty and was always getting detentions.

Chapter 2

It was Monday and as Elizabeth walked to school there were birds tweeting and bees buzzing. This week they were due to have a new teacher. As she got to school, pupils were rushing to the playground to play games. Some students were having early detentions. Elizabeth's classroom was gloomy and the walls were rough and tatty.

The new teacher's name was Mr Hamsington. He had brown, scruffy

hair and he was quite thin. He did not smile very often and was very strict.

In the morning, Mr Hamsington caught Alex and Elizabeth whispering together and told them to stay back and miss the morning break. When it came to break-time, he told them to sit at the back of the classroom, which meant that they could not see Mr Hamsington or what he was doing. However, Alex managed to sneak out of the classroom without being seen and caught a glimpse of Mr

Hamsington breaking into the locked cupboard in the school office where they kept their money! And the school had tons of money. Alex could not believe what he was seeing. Mr Hamsington was a thief!



Chapter 3

The next day (Tuesday), things were even stranger. Mr Hamsington was acting weirdly - and was even smiling. Elizabeth and Alex decided it was time to catch Mr Hamsington. They had a few ideas...

Firstly, they made a potion in the playground to give to Mr Hamsington, to make him tell his darkest secrets. But he found out before they could make him drink the potion, and they

got triple-detention and had to clean the whole classroom.

It nearly worked when they tried to look at the papers that he kept in his desk for clues, but he caught them again and gave them the same punishment (with a different classroom to clean this time).

Some of the other children realised that something was going on and teamed up with Elizabeth and Alex to find out what Mr Hamsington was up to - they wanted to help too.

They tried a few other options until they were left with one more. If that option did not work, they would have to give up. The option was: making a trap.

Chapter 4

On Wednesday, the children made the trap. It was hard work. They covered it with leaves to make it difficult to be seen. There was a net and some special chemicals so that when the chemicals sensed Mr Hamsington's shoe, the net would tighten and fly up into the air and hang from the ceiling, with Mr Hamsington suspended within it.

When Mr Hamsington came outside, everyone in Elizabeth's class held their breath. Suddenly, he blew the end of

school day whistle. Oh no! It was the end of the day. The trap would have to wait until tomorrow. But would it last? Elizabeth was not sure - neither was Alex, and nor were the other children in their class. It was scary thinking that their last plan might fail and they would have to give up.



Chapter 5

On Thursday, things were even more complicated. The children had to re-set some of the leaves on the trap, to make it hard to see (like it had been the day before).

Suddenly, Mr Hamsington came out of their classroom and walked right around the trap and to the front of the playground. He started looking at something when the bell went. He walked to the front of the neatly

formed line. He was going to miss the trap! Sneaky.

Elizabeth was at the front of the line - and she knew what to do. When Mr Hamsington walked over to her, she kicked him right in the knee and he went flying. Luckily, the chemicals in the trap sensed him - snap! The trap had finally got him.

All of the teachers came rushing up to find out what the noise was about. One of them said, "What is all of this noise about?" Then she spotted Mr

Hamsington caught in the trap. "John Hamsington? Is that you?"

In a muffled voice, he replied, "No...I mean, yes."

"Why are you in that net?" another teacher asked.

Once Elizabeth's class had finally explained to the teachers that Mr Hamsington was a thief, and once the teachers had finally believed that what they were saying was true, the children were sent inside to their classroom. The real reason they finally believed the children was that the

teachers had found the school's money in Mr Hamsington's pockets. The police arrived and put Mr Hamsington into handcuffs (which was so cool).

Elizabeth's class were told that as a reward for catching a real life criminal, they did not have to come into school on Friday. But before they could start to celebrate, the headmistress came in with a familiar-looking lady.

The headmistress said, "Everyone! I'd like to introduce you to your new

*teacher. Guys, I'd like you to meet...Mrs
Hamsington!"*

And everyone groaned!



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There is something strange going on at St Thomas' Secondary and Elizabeth and Alex are eager to find out what it is. Together, they discover what their new teacher is up to and make new friends along the way.

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