

Matt Bixler

My Unconventional Life

This story ended up with this weird feeling like it was some sort of morality play from the Bizzarro world. A lot of the story felt a little bit aimless, but at the same time as soon as I read the first night of babysitting I figured out that there was going to be a speech at the end, and what it was going to be about. The main character, which I assume was meant to be a voice-of-reason type, just came off as being condescending to those around her, and the people around her just sounded dumb, leaving the only likable character in the story to be Mark, who simply wasn't developed enough to have a fault.

It's not a bad idea, and the message isn't one not worth stating, but at the same time I felt preached to as I read this, and by someone I didn't particularly care for.

Matt Bixler

A Ghost Story

Through the entire time I read this I kept thinking about the old Nickelodeon show “Are you Afraid of the Dark.” The story in itself actually made for a good ghost story, and I was pleasantly surprised how nothing horrible happened to the teenagers at the end. The idea of a spooky tale ending with an uplifting beat is actually something worth writing, but in the end, it simply felt like a good ghost story.

Not that there's anything wrong with that.

Matt Bixler

The Rocket Slide

I found this story to be endlessly endearing with an ending that got to me. The characters were written very well, especially for writing for a child, and the whole thing was just really adorable. While the message of the story is one I wholeheartedly agree with, and I feel is worth writing about, it felt heavy-handed and awkwardly made. Personally, I feel like if you took out the entire courtroom sequence and kept the whole story on the playground it would flow much better and feel much more natural.

It's a story worth telling, which makes me think it's worth revising to tell it just right.