

Chapter 13

Killing Me Softly

Peter Hurd

Hello. (No wait...that's not academic...what about...) In this chapter I will Zzzzzzzz....Nope, can't do it. Sorry. You see, I'm not an academic and it would be oh so wrong of me to even attempt to imitate/style myself as one. I'm a primary school teacher, more specifically an 'infant/lower Key Stage 1 supply primary school teacher'. But that's a bit of a mouthful so I generally just say, "I'm a teacher." I've been a qualified teacher since 2001. Worked fulltime for a couple of years (wild horses wouldn't drag me back!) but prefer working as a supply teacher. I've had the odd part time temporary contract here and there but 'doing supply' is where I'm at!

Anyway, I was asked if I would write about the 'Zombification of Education'. You could just as easily call this story 'Blood at the Chalkface', 'Attack of the SAT's', 'OFSTED ate my baby', 'Dawn of the Head (teacher)', 'INSET Day of the Dead' or...or....

Killing Me Softly: Part 1

Often, a school is your best bet – perhaps not for education but certainly for protection from an undead attack. (Max Brooks, *The Zombie Survival Guide*.)

Don't get me wrong I'm grateful for the work and I do love doing what I do, it's just that the longer I'm doing it the more I find it harder to keep myself looking (and feeling) human. I wasn't always part zombie after all. All of me was once living tissue; ate proper food, breathed regularly, had a functioning circulatory system... the works! So when did I start to decay? I guess the first signs of necrosis – for me – started sometime in the mid noughties. I didn't think anything of it at first. I mean,

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who did? A bit of flaky skin, lack of appetite...shit...I was losing weight, what's not to like, right? But when I began to lose the ability to form coherent sentences (whenever I was working) that's when I knew something was up. I tried doing something about it – contacted my Union, talked (well grunted) to colleagues – all to no avail. Hell, everyone I knew who worked in schools was afflicted, even the kids to some extent. It was as if my chosen vocation had been transformed into an episode of 'The Walking Dead' overnight. But it wasn't overnight, for me. That was/is kind of worrying.

Education in schools has changed and not for the best. It's like everything is now slower. I don't mean physically, although most educationalists are dragging their legs around more and more so, but intellectually and creatively. And, to my way of thinking, had become more...morally ambiguous.

I work as a supply teacher (primary) and am currently in **CENSORED** covering a Year 3 teacher who's off sick with stress...that and her dry weeping put the last strain on her ligaments holding her arms to her shoulders, ergo, they fell off. Apparently they'll reattach with time off from work. Anyway, I gave up trying to get work through my local Council a while ago. I was too expensive the schools said, so I joined up with one of these Teaching Agencies. I get my work through 'Necropolis Education Direction' now. They don't pay us on the same rate as our full and part time colleagues (and there's no pension provision!) which has always struck me as kinda wrong but if I want work then that's the way it is. I think that was when my face began to lose colour, slacken and droop...being treated as second class.

It's 8.15 am when I get to school – I've been up since 6 am (ish) – and the secretary lets me in. "Moorinnng Meessterrr Leeewwwiiss," she groans. I mumble a reply, sign in and make my way to the staff room. When I open the door I see Miss. Glossop, the NQT Year 4 teacher slumped on a chair by the window. She looks worse than I do; hell, at least I know that my stint will end in a couple of weeks and then I can have a proper break before looking for more work but she truly looks like shit. I've seen this before of course, ain't nothing new. An NQT at the end of their second term looking harried, stressed and just generally knackered, but now with this zombie shit affecting all those who are involved in education, well... she doesn't smell so good and her once beautiful strawberry blonde hair is now a thin and greasy mass. Poor kid. She looks up at me from a pile of papers that are on the table in front of her. All colour in her eyes has just about gone, replaced with the off milky white that so many teachers are getting these days.

"Lookkk aatt aaalll thiiiiiss cccrraaapp," she whines. I lurch over and peer at the papers. Levels, targets, 'optional SAT's along with a whole host of other stuff which if I'm honest, I haven't got a clue is for, stare back at me. I nod, grunt my commiserations at the mound of paperwork in front of her and go and make myself a coffee. Really, I don't want to get involved. It's partly because of stuff like that that I got out of fulltime teaching.

On the way to the classroom I bump into the Head, Mr. Jones. I say bump but after we'd both grumbled greetings at each other, we did the zombie shuffle dance around each other and then went on our respective ways. He's a good man Mr. Jones

from what I have gathered, that and the fact that his greyness is more acute than his members of staff have lead me to believe that he's not just a career climbing nob. I've met some Heads who still look relatively human. Grin like idiots and seem to ignore the decay all around them. But old Jonesy has been here for nearly 30 years; an 'old school' Head trying to keep his school going in a system that, increasingly, doesn't understand what he does and doesn't seem to care.

It's just after 8.30 am when I enter Mrs. Atherton's Year 3 classroom, my classroom for the last 4 weeks and the next two weeks, and begin mentally preparing myself for when the kids arrive.

According to a recent survey by the Department of Education (2014) teachers reported, on average, working over 50 hours a week – primary staff just shy of 60. A majority of teachers said that they spent some or most of their time on “unnecessary or bureaucratic” tasks. 45 % had said that this aspect of their work had increased. Schools are swamping their staff in data and targets, leaving little room or energy for teachers to put forward the core human values that were once at the centre of what teachers do.

The government's own figures admit that 40 % of new teachers quit within their first five years. According to the OECD, England has one of the youngest teacher workforces in the developed world, due (in part) because older, more experienced (and more expensive) teachers are squeezed out.

“People feel their professionalism's been taken away because it's all about getting kids to pass tests. Passing a test is not necessarily learning: it's a snapshot of one day.” English and Special needs teacher, 42, central London; founder of teacherroar.nlogspot.com

Due to the cutbacks placed on the public sector by the present government Councils in England and Wales have little recourse to keep a supply teaching register; not when there are private companies willing to place supply teachers into their schools for a lower charge than the agreed wages formulated by the teaching Unions. It is a loophole that has been/is exploited to the full, generating a two tier system within the profession. Supply teachers can see their wages cut by at least 25 %, quite often more. The choice given to them is 'take it or leave it' because there are always those who are desperate enough for the work, even at a fantastically reduced rate. Those that have been paying into the Teacher's pension scheme can no longer do so whilst working for these agencies, therefore seeing a further slash in their long term income.

My own experiences of being a supply teacher with a corporate education company have left a few choice quotes embedded in my memory; such as “No one will employ you at your Union rate,” “Will you take less money?” and the all-time classic, “How much are you worth?” Being with the children and doing what you love can only help so much when you see your profession shedding chunks of flesh before your eyes.

Killing Me Softly: Part 2

Between 9 am when the bell sounds and 9.05 they scurry in, most of them eager, some still looking a little tired. The tired looking ones are dropped off by the breakfast club. Their pallor and speech are pretty normal first thing in the morning but as the day goes by they all look a little grey, eyes dull and speech patterns a little more akin to cro-magnon man than a 21st century 7 year old from a “developed” country. Still, they’re here and for now they’re pretty with it.

Anyway, as I finish the register and the class line up for assembly, I’m reminded of why I like this job, for all its faults. George, one of the breakfast and afterschool club kids, gives me a picture that he’s drawn. It’s me yet not...if you know what I mean. I’m totally grey and slobbering at the mouth. At the top of the picture it reads ‘Mr. Lewis is ace!’ I smile and thank George, then lead them off to the hall; the sounds of shuffling and scuffing of feet resonate all around along with a lingering smell of decay, not too strong but there all the same.

Assembly was taken by Mr. Jones and was quick (as quick as one can be whose speech patterns are falling apart) and to the point. He’s one of those heads who realises that the teaching staff need as much time as possible to get everything in of the curriculum that they can. As the school’s C of E assisted and Easter’s approaching, he did the dead yet alive talk. Surprisingly it received quite a few nods from staff and kids alike. Now I’m not the most religious of people but I reckon we’re getting desperate when the kids are starting to sympathise with the whole ‘Lazarus’ thing.

Back in the classroom I set to with teaching Literacy. I was following the curriculum plans and all was going normally when one of the kids – Barbara – asks a question which comes from nowhere and kinda throws the direction of the lesson into unknown territory. There was silence for a while then the kids started to chat about Barbara’s idea, asking me questions like I knew what to do...I didn’t but it was invigorating dealing with it all. The chatter got faster, the flesh-tones of the children began to shine and their eyes sparkled. I looked at the back of my own hands...the colour of them...they looked healthy! “This is great!” I said...no slurring of words! “Well done Barbara!” her smile lit up the room. “Let’s split up into groups and...” An arm shot up from the back from one of the boys. “Yes Rick?”

“Whhaartss thhhe ooobbjjeeccttiivveeee?” he moaned. And just like that the spark disappeared... “Maaayybbbee”...along with my speech. “Weeee sssshh-hooouullld sstttiiiiicckk ttooooo ttthhee lllleesssssssoooooonnnn pppplllll-laaaaaaaannnnn.” I swear I could feel one of my kidneys collapsing, Barbara’s left nostril caved in that’s for sure. I made a mental note to have a word with her parents at the end of the day and carried on with the lesson. Ah well, it was good to feel human while it lasted.

After break I taught Numeracy and kept to the plan. It was ok I guess, I was certainly flagging by the end of the session and some of the noises from the children’s empty stomachs were beginning to put me off as well. “Ffffooooooddd.” I groaned. “Leeetttt uuuussss ppprrrraaayy!” We all put our hands together – carefully so as not to break off any fingers that were showing signs of wear and tear – said grace

and sent them off to dinner. I flopped back in my chair, just for a second, before marking the work from the morning lessons. Normally I'm lucky if I get 20 minutes for my lunch because of marking the mornings work, going over the lesson plans for the afternoon, collecting up any equipment needed and I still have to eat something before the kids are back. However, today is my PPA day, a small 10 % window in the week when I can plan (a little bit), prepare (a little bit), mark (a little bit) and catch up with whatever needs 'catching up' with (...a little bit).

I had started to look over the work. Sod it, I thought, give yourself an hour for lunch for once, live wild. And with that I slumped off to the staffroom with my cheese sandwich wishing that I had something else to eat instead, something a little less veggie and a whole lot bloodier.

Research published by the ATL (Association of Teachers and Lecturers) in April 2014, illuminated a growing problem in primary schools in England and Wales. That children as young as four are spending 10 hours a day at school. The survey of more than 1300 teachers found a growing number of parents putting the need to work ahead of spending time with their children.

“There is an expectation to work before looking after your family. Living costs mean it is unaffordable for only one parent to work.” A Primary school teacher from Bexley, ATL Report.

Many examples from primary teachers included in the report tell of infants starting school at 8 am (breakfast club) and staying until 6 pm (after school club) day in and day out, wandering from playground to desk to after school care, perpetually tired, ashen and grey faced.

According to Melissa Benn writing in the Guardian 17/04/14;

“Educational reform now largely equals intensive schooling; early morning catch-up-classes, after school clubs, longer terms, shorter holidays, more testing, more homework.”

And that...

“Overtired children don't learn. And hungry over tired children fall asleep, or kick off.”

Once I worked in a very deprived area in the North of England – there's a lot of em' – where the day with all the infant classes started not with the register but with toast because most of the kids didn't get breakfast at home. A sad inditement of 21st century Britain but hey! As long as it's not happening for the vast majority of kids let's just keep it on the down low shall we? That is of course until now when we're seeing a growth in another form of child abuse – the institutionalised infant. If we are all subject to the dominant ideology and the crucial formative years are 0–5 years old is it possible to make an educated guess at how society is going to function in say 20 years' time? Not just institutionalised (nothing new there!) but institution-alised as an individual. Conspiracy theorists go nuts!

An agreement by a group of academics, teachers' unions, professional associations and children's authors with expertise in primary education, gave a joint statement response to the D of E's consultation on the draft primary national curriculum 16th April 2013. In the statement there are many common areas of concern with

headings such as, ‘Learning and understanding’, ‘Age-appropriateness’ and ‘Breadth and Balance’ which states that it:

“...should be at the heart of the primary curriculum. We were promised a slimmer curriculum, but the proposals remain over –prescriptive, leaving little room for teacher or school flexibility. The core subjects are over specified, including statutory spelling lists and details of arithmetic procedures, and art likely to constrain curriculum innovation in schools, with insufficient room for other valued areas of learning, including creative, and practical subjects.”

There is also one named ‘Trust’ concerning teachers’ use of professional judgement and experience. Trust...the cornerstone of any relationship.

I personally have mixed feelings about the curriculum. As a Primary school teacher you are expected to be knowledgeable to GCE standard in 14 subjects. Yeah, right. Everyone has their favourites and the rest of the time you do your best. As a supply teacher if I’m only called in for the odd day I sometimes find that I can teach whatever I want (especially if no work has been left) which is great! Yet if I’ve had anything longer than a couple of days with the same class then I’ve had to stick to the curriculum which can be constricting and at times boring but also a handy get out when you are teaching a subject which is not one of your strongest.

If I had to teach it every day and found the time I need to make it my own, less and less possible, then I think I could get very low indeed. Teachers spend a lot of time at work, if they have very little control over what and how they teach then eventually they’ll either revolt or leave. Who wouldn’t?

Killing Me Softly: Part 3

When I got to the staffroom Miss Glossop was hunched over one of the tables chewing slowly. She was masticating like a tortoise but it wasn’t leaves she was munching on. It looked like a piece of semi-raw meat, what kind I don’t know but the smell of iron all rich and bloody wafting across the room made my cheese and pickle sandwich rather unappetising. She glanced up from her gnawing, gulped down the last piece of gristly meat, wiped her mouth and stood up to go.

“Gggggooooottttt tttoooo ggeett bbbacckk.” She moaned. “Iiiiiii” mmm bbbeee-iiinnngggg ooooooobbbssseeeerrrvveeeddd llllaaaatttteerrrr.” I grunted non-committedly. I gathered it was like this for her most days. 5–10 minutes for lunch then back to her classroom. I sat down and began eating my sandwich; it was just fuel...no enjoyment in eating it, just fuel. I couldn’t get the smell of the bloody meat out of my nostrils that Miss. Glossop had been eating. I’ve noticed that there are a lot of younger teachers succumbing to our physical debilitation a lot more than there used to be. Eating raw meat is usually the first signs of total human collapse. I manage to keep from going totally native by being a supply teacher...Christ, I thought, what a clusterfuck. Oh well, just two weeks to go.

It was half way through the dinner hour when my PPA cover wandered in.

Mrs. Grimes covered the PPA for most of the classes taking P.E., spelling and sometimes I.T. She wasn't a qualified teacher which kinda irked me, being a qualified teacher doing supply, after all, she was taking work away from people like me because she was a lot cheaper (even on my reduced rate) and because she gave a sense of continuity to kids cos' she was a fulltime TA in the school. Correction: was a TA now she was a HTLA (Higher teaching Level Assistant) or 'cover supervisor' or something like that. Anyway, the point being that she did what once upon a time only qualified teachers could do...what I spent four years of my life training for and accumulating a shit load of debt in the process.

She looked a little haggard but she always had a smile, the kids loved her and I have to admit she was good with them.

"Tiiiss ttthhhee lllleeeesssonnnnn pppplllllaaaannnnn iiiinnnn ttthhhee ccccllllaasssrroooooomm?" she asked. I nodded then she ambled off. I'd left everything she needed for the afternoon. "Seeee yyyooouuu llllaaaaaattteerrr." I'd be back at the end of the day to see the kids off and chat with any of the parents if they needed me.

Teachers and assistants shuffled in and out of the room. A quick bite, a grunt or two in way of polite conversation, then the dinner hour was over and with an empty staffroom all to myself I settled into two and a half hours PPA. No way near enough time and as there was a staff meeting at 4 pm it looked like I had a long night ahead of me. I spread a few sheets of paper around the table and picked up the weekly plan. I asked myself again how the hell was I going to get this stuff all in and do a good job of it all? The short answer was always 'you're not, so just do the best you can'. I glanced up at the wall in front of me and the Union noticeboard that hung there. Mr. Hannah the year 6 teacher and Union rep had put up a poster encouraging people to vote for strike action. I have to say that I agree with the sentiment but can't really see what one day's action will do? It's a tricky one for teachers – even necrotic ones – as they tend to like their jobs and feel guilty or under pressure to catch up when they're not in school. I shook my head to clear such thoughts. I must have done it a mite to quick as my left ear lobe fell off. Shit! That was the second time it has happened in recent days, I knew it would re-affix itself eventually – with a bit of time away from work – but...!? Come on! Sometimes I feel I'm just falling apart.

According to Richard Adams writing in the Guardian 11/04/14, "...official figures showed a sharp rise in the number of unqualified teachers employed by state-funded schools in England...The Department of education figures reveal that, after years of decline in the number of unqualified teachers, there was a sharp jump from 14,800 in 2012 to 17,100 in November last year."

I know that the rise of unqualified teachers has risen with the present Education Secretary's 'pioneering ideas' of Free Schools and growth in Academies but I experienced this phenomenon during the last government's administration. I had been working quite a bit for a primary school doing PPA cover and the odd day for courses (remember them!) when all of a sudden the work from this school dried up considerably due to their use of HTLA's to cover PPA time. For me, this was the beginning of a slow end to a job I enjoy(ed).

According to a survey carried out by the ATL more than half (55 %) of those questioned say work pressures are having a detrimental effect on their wellbeing. Four in the ten have noticed a rise in mental health problems among colleagues over the past two years.

“Education professionals do more unpaid overtime than any other group and are put under constant intense pressure to meet targets, with excessive observation, changes in the curriculum and Ofsted inspections...it’s as though nothing is done unless it’s written down.” Mary Bousted, General Secretary ATL.

The survey reports that many teachers are afraid to tell their schools that they are having problems because of the stigma attached to mental health problems. 68 % of teachers surveyed who reported having mental health problems said they decided to hide it from their employers.

When I was fulltime I remember being physically ill and stressed a heck of a lot. Even as a supply teacher there have been times when the job has run me down physically and mentally. I don’t think it’s such a ‘job for life’ as it used to be, because you have no life while you’re doing it, potentially ruining your overall wellbeing and future health. But that’s just me talking...

On the 25/03/14 the NUT held a one day national strike in protest over teacher’s pay and conditions and (at time of writing) is still an unresolved industrial dispute.

I’ve been a Trade Unionist all my working life (TGWU, UNISON, NUT) and still believe the core foundations of what being a trade union member is all about. However, since the Thatcher years trades union rights have been diminished to such an extent (and its membership de-politicised) that I have to question our leaders actions...especially constrained as they are. The spirit to fight back for one’s occupation is not as strong as it used to from a membership point of view. The rhetoric is still there from our leaders but not the will to fight unjust laws and lead by example. Our forebears who fought and sacrificed so much must be turning in their graves.

Killing Me Softly: Part 4

I’d barely started getting to grips with my planning when I realised it was nearly 3.30. Time to go and see the kids off. I shuffled back to my classroom, I was pretty weary and dragging my feet more than usual and the thought of a staff meeting didn’t fill me with any glee, but ‘hey ho’ that’s the way it is. By the time I’d got back the kids were in two lines; those to go home and those going on to after school club (dubbed ‘The little Rotters’ by the staff team...unofficially of course) on their way to complete their 10 hour day.

I had a word with Barbara’s mum about her nostril caving. Thankfully she’s pretty understanding of school life and told me it was ok, whilst Mrs. Grimes bundled ‘The little Rotters’ off to the hall. Ten minutes later the classroom was empty. I sat down at my desk and let out a groan which was echoed by all off my colleagues

throughout the school as each classroom emptied of their charges. I got up, grabbed my bag and started the end of day shuffle towards the staff room. All you could hear was the sound of scraping footsteps interspersed with little moans reverberating around the corridors as all of the teaching staff began to gather in the staff room and seat themselves down.

Jonesy was last in. He slowly closed the door. God he looked rough, I mean we all do at the end of the day – different levels of decomposition depending on what kind of a day we’d had n’all that – but he looked like his threadbare suit and tie were the only things holding him together. He flopped down and the moans, groans and drawn out breaths of conversation dissipated as we waited for him to begin.

(For the purposes of this meeting the following transcript will be written in ‘normal human’ speech. I mean, staff meetings are usually pretty tedious anyway without the zombification process drawing out the process...so...use your imagination.)

Jonesy: Well everyone...the news isn’t good I’m afraid (sigh). We’ve a lot to get through and I’m sure you’ve all got other things to do be doing and that you’d like to get home sometime this evening. First up, due to further cutbacks and policy changes we’re going to have to make some changes in the next school year. (Moans, groans and collective pulling of hair from the staff) Coupled with the fact that the parents and Governors are clamouring for us to become a ‘free school/academy, (more moans and groans with the sickly sounds of various appendages breaking off and flopping onto the carpet) we have a rough ride ahead us.

Miss Glossop: Does this mean that my contract won’t be renewed?

Jonesy: I’ll talk about that with you later...in private.

Mr. Hannah: Look Jonesy, I know you’re under pressure but as the Union rep I...

Jonesy: I know Geoff, I know, but just bear with me whilst I outline to you all what I know and what I think will happen.

And so the meeting went on until roughly 6 pm when we were allowed to leave. Christ, I don’t know how they do it. I mean the job is hard enough as it is without all the shit that this present administration is bringing down on them. I decided to leave and do work at home, I was seriously flagging and the blood cravings were getting stronger. I thank my lucky stars that I am a supply teacher and that my end date for working in this school was coming up soon. As I left the building I noticed Miss. Glossop struggling with a stack of exercise books and papers trying to open the boot to her car. I shambled over to offer some assistance.

“Caaannn iiiiii hheeelllppp?”

She looked up and...her face...her face had lost all remnants of life...human life, replaced by nothing more than a cadaverous mask. “Mmmmooooooaaaaaaahhhhhhhh.” Came her reply. I took her keys from her and opened the boot. She leaned over and deposited her cares and worries and looked me in the eyes. A despairing grey blankness faced me. She slowly nodded her thanks and I left to continue my way home.

As I ambled with my small backpack full of my own stresses and strains I passed the local butchers (‘Gove’s Establishment Butchers’) just shutting up for the night.

I couldn't resist it any longer – that urge to chew on bloody raw flesh – so I turned back and entered just as the butcher was bringing in his sign.

“Teacher are you?” came a voice above a red splattered apron.

“Uuuuurrmmmm.” I replied.

“They all come to me in the end” said the man reaching behind the glass counter.

“Here you go.” He handed me a soft pink package, cool to the touch. I nodded my thanks. “See you soon,” he intoned as I left the shop and he closed the door behind me.

I didn't even have any tears to cry, my ducts had all dried up, so, clutching my evening repast, I dragged my feet onwards to home. How had this happened? I thought. Why has this happened? And what the hell do I do about it now? Is there anything I can do about it? Tired and hungry I moaned my torment into the ever darkening twilight.

The (dead) End.

You know something? I have done a bit of research on this (not that I'm as well experienced as you who are reading this are – I'm not an academic!) and for this final section I had planned to put in a few quotes and a bit of analysis from people such as Tricia Kelleher, head of the Stephen Perse Foundation, Neill Leitch, chief executive of the Pre-School Learning Alliance, Ros McMullen, principal of the David Young Community Academy in Leeds and a host of others...but you know what, after winding up my little black comedy I feel really bereft and low and the only thing I can think of doing is writing from the heart. A teacher's heart, battered and bruised as it may be.

I am in full agreement with 'thenerdyteacher.com' in that he believes our current education system is more focused on creating not a well-rounded thinker but on a relentless series of tests which in turn creates not only a 'zombified' pupil, but also an increasingly 'undead' and unfeeling teacher. Zombies do not think. They do not problem solve. They are not creative. They wander. Zombies are inherently drawn to the living, they crave life yet to kill a zombie their brain must be destroyed. However, killing a zombie is never an easy thing and the changes that the state wishes to bring about to our education system will be just as tough and those at the 'chalkface' are suffering because of it.

For those of us who can survive this process life will be tougher than it has been for a long, long time. Survivors, children like Karl in Robert Kirkman's 'The Walking Dead', are being increasingly forced to grow up as soon as possible. No more to be nurtured and to grow in their own time, to fulfil their own potential as a fully rounded member of society, gently yet solidly pushing the goals for furthering humanity. It is becoming more of a savage lurch from one test to another forever caked in the gore of SATs and Targets, to be spewed out at the end of educational life.

And for those in the future, if this zombification of education is not checked? I refer to Alden Bell's novel 'The Reapers and the Angels' where a young teenage girl named Temple, lives in a post-zombie apocalypse environment. Knowing

nothing else than the survival of the fittest and expecting nothing more. For her this life has become normal. Is this what the future pupils and educationalists will think in a system that has been left to decay?

As for me? Well at the time of writing this piece (summer term 2014) I've experienced less supply teaching days this last school year than ever before. Mind you I no longer work for an agency – couldn't take the second class teacher thing along with the 'making a profit out of a child's education' anymore – and work solely through the local council. This year I really believe that my teaching days are over. Killed and left to rot and that is the way I will stay. No 'Rising' for me. The dead should stay dead. Sad really.