

After the teacher introduced me as Nicholas's Aunt Laurie, she assigned me to the spider web table, where I was supposed to help little kids make a spider web on a piece of paper with glue and string. And that was all going fine until the first little girl I was supposed to help, Angelina-Charlize, didn't want to make a spider web, she just wanted to write her name. I was cool with that. That was fine. No skin off my nose. Go ahead and write your name, you know? So Angelina-Charlize wrote her name, complete with a backward r. In an attempt at helping, I told her that we should try turning the r around a bit, and that's when she openly mocked me.

ANGELINA -CHARLIZE: (*chanting*) Aunt Gloria doesn't know how to make an "r" . . .
That's so sad for a grown-up.

LAURIE: No, really, the r needs to face the other way -- Would you like me to show you?

ANGELINA-CHARLIZE: There's an r in my name, so I should know. Aunt Gloria can't make an r, Aunt Gloria can't make an r!

LAURIE: Actually, it's Aunt Laurie, and I've been writing for a long time, so maybe I should know,"

ANGELINA-CHARLIZE: If you know, then why can't you make one? Because you can't!
You can't you can't you caaaan't!"

"You know," I wanted so desperately to tell them, "you girls keep writing in your little chimp hieroglyphics that only a mirror can read and I'll be more than happy to write you a recommendation to Klown Kollege when the time comes, because you will indeed need it."

Instead, I just smiled and said,

LAURIE: March to your own dyslexic drum, Angelina Calista Jennifer Aniston Lopez Drew

Barrymore. I just really hope you like the circus.

That was pretty much the moment that Nicholas's teacher came over, leaned into my ear and whispered, "Maybe we should try the play area, where it's not so structured."

I had been fired from the spider web table. I had just totally gotten fired from the spider web table, and unjustly so!