Priscilla

Monk and his minions live to intimidate others. For example, when the lunch bell rings, they take money from other students in the cafeteria. They have control of the campus and can shake down students with impunity. Their victims have been psychologically conditioned and degraded to fawn and submit to their oppressors. The slightest sway of an approaching Kobra elicits hypnotic submission without resistance.

In “Priscilla and the Wimps” by Richard Peck, Monk and his minions live to intimidate others. For example, when the lunch bell rings, the Kobras take money from other students in the cafeteria. The thugs are heartless lowlifes who thrive on harassing young, innocent kids. They feel superior as they flex their power over their victims. In this public arena, no one risks challenging their authority, and so the extortion continues unabated.

Priscilla is brave to confront the thugs who are terrorizing the school. For example, when Kobra pushes Melvin and tries to take his wallet, she hits the bully with her hand and makes him let go of her friend. No matter how intimidating the gang is, Pricilla values friendship over personal safety. She cares about the underdog and is a champion for that cause. In addition, when Monk tries to trick Melvin at the end of the story, Priscilla holds Monk in a head-lock and pushes him into her locker. While Monk puts up a façade of toughness, he has miscalculated by thinking that having many followers is stronger than the power of one oversized girl. Monk has learned the very hard lesson that there is not necessarily strength in numbers, and his reign as head bully has come to a disgraceful end by Priscilla’s swift hand.

Priscilla’s actions show that the despicable Kobras are not as cohesive s the rest of the school thinks. The gang’s collection agency disperses after Priscilla shoves Monk into her own locker. Retaliation is not an option for her, who fiercely defends the underdog Melvin. Her invulnerability is juxtaposed with his defenselessness. Priscilla ensures that Monk and his cohorts shed their skin of invincibility to reveal their cowardly selves.