

THE DIVINE SISTER

Mother Superior, Timothy (1 woman, 1 boy)

1960's Pittsburgh. Timothy, a sensitive twelve-year-old student, enters carrying a baseball bat. He interrupts Mother Superior's reverie.

TIMOTHY

Reverend Mother? Reverend Mother? Oh, there you are. Reverend Mother, I'm here for baseball practice.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Is it that time all ready? Oh, yes, of course, Timothy. And how have we been doing on the baseball diamond?

TIMOTHY

A little better, Reverend Mother. But still nobody wants me on their team.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Well, we shall soon remedy that.

TIMOTHY

Golly, Reverend Mother, I don't think I'll ever be any good. I'm just rotten.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

I'm surprised at you, Timothy. You're not a quitter. We've only had twenty lessons thus far.

TIMOTHY

Thirty-seven, to be precise.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Has it been that many? You haven't told Sister Acacius that I've been coaching you. Have you?

TIMOTHY

Gee, Reverend Mother. I'd never do that. Cross my heart and hope to die. I'd never want to get you in trouble.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

It's just that Sister Acacius is in charge of our physical education program and I wouldn't want her to think I was stepping on her tennis shoes, so to speak.

TIMOTHY

Not a soul knows I come here and they never will.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Well, now, show me how you've been holding the bat.

(Timothy holds the bat in a woeful fashion.)

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MOTHER SUPERIOR

It still doesn't appear to be quite right.

(Mother Superior stands behind him and holds the bat with him.)

MOTHER SUPERIOR

For one thing, your legs aren't far enough apart. And sort of sit down in it. Yes, yes, that's much better. Now I'm no Mickey Mantle or Roger Maris, but I believe the bat should be held almost parallel to your shoulder. Yes, that's right, Timothy. You're getting it and just keep your eye focused on that ball.

TIMOTHY

Like your eyes are on Jesus?

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Exactly. You're a good boy. Now swing!

(He tries to swing the bat and then despairs.)

TIMOTHY

Oh, what's the use, Reverend Mother. I'll never be good enough. I can't even tell you the name everyone calls me.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Timothy, what do they call you? Childhood names can be painful but in retrospect they are never that bad.

TIMOTHY

A cock sucking faggot.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

What does Sister Acacius say when they call you that?

TIMOTHY

She's the one who started it.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Well, she just doesn't want the other boys to think she's playing favorites. Here, let's try again. This time I'm going to pretend I'm pitching. Here we go. Ready?

(Mother Superior mimes winding up and pitching the ball, but Timothy gives up and starts to cry. He moves away from her and covers his eyes.)

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Timothy, now what's the matter?

(She goes over and comforts him.)

THE DIVINE SISTER

TIMOTHY

Golly, I'm sorry, Reverend Mother. I guess I am acting like a little fairy.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Is there something else that's bothering you?

TIMOTHY

It's hard for me to talk about.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Why don't you try? Perhaps I can be of some help.

TIMOTHY

You can be enormously sympathetic. Reverend Mother, have you ever really liked someone, liked them so much it hurt and wanted them to be your friend but you don't know how to let 'em know you want to be their friend?

MOTHER SUPERIOR

And who do you want to be friends with?

TIMOTHY

Kevin Shaughnessy.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Kevin Shaughnessy. He's our star athlete. But wasn't he the one who was bullying you the worst?

TIMOTHY

Yeah, but he's not so bad anymore. I think he's a great guy.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

What is it you like about him? Sometimes what we admire in others are simply the qualities we wish to possess in ourselves.

TIMOTHY

Well, I know it's kind of silly but I like hearing the funny way he talks while he's eating. And I like watching him race across the courtyard when he's late for class. I like the pretty way his hair falls across his forehead. And how he smells when he finishes wrestling practice. And seeing the sweat catch above his upper lip. I like his hairy armpits. And I –

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Ahem, yes, he's an admirable sort of fellow.

TIMOTHY

Should I just come out and tell Kevin how much I like him? What if he hauls off and belts me? He might just tackle me and pin me to the ground. Well, I guess I could handle that.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Timothy, sometimes it's best not to say anything.

THE DIVINE SISTER

TIMOTHY

Keep a secret? But that's like telling a lie and I thought lying was a sin.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

It's just that some personal feelings are better kept to oneself. You might want to try placing them in a beautiful imaginary box.

TIMOTHY

A jewelry box?

MOTHER SUPERIOR

How about a cigar box?

TIMOTHY

I'd rather it be a jewelry box, covered with rhinestones and lined in red velvet?

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Yes, well, I think you should try putting all those special feelings into that box and lock it shut with a large silver key. Then bury the box in a secret imaginary hiding place. In time, you'll forget where you buried it and in time, you'll forget you ever had those feelings.