

SISTER ALOYSIUS  
SISTER JAMES

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SISTER ALOYSIUS. What?

SISTER JAMES. He's taken an interest. Since Donald went on the altar boys. *(Pause.)* I thought I should tell you.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. I told you to come to me, but I hoped you never would.

SISTER JAMES. Maybe I shouldn't have.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. I knew once you did, something would be set in motion. So it's happened.

SISTER JAMES. What?! I'm not telling you that! I'm not even certain what you mean.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. Yes, you are.

SISTER JAMES. I've been trying to become more cold in my thinking as you suggested ... I feel as if I've lost my way a little, Sister Aloysius. I had the most terrible dream last night. I want to be guided by you and responsible to the children, but I want my peace of mind. I must tell you I have been longing for the return of my peace of mind.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. You may not have it. It is not your place to be complacent. That's for the children. That's what we give them.

SISTER JAMES. I think I'm starting to understand you a little. But it's so unsettling to look at things and people with suspicion. It feels as if I'm less close to God.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. When you take a step to address wrongdoing, you are taking a step away from God, but in His service. Dealing with such matters is hard and thankless work.

SISTER JAMES. I've become more reserved in class. I feel separated from the children.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. That's as it should be.

SISTER JAMES. But I feel Wrong. And about this other matter, I don't have any evidence. I'm not at all certain that anything's happened.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. We can't wait for that.

SISTER JAMES. But what if it's nothing?

SISTER ALOYSIUS. Then it's nothing. I wouldn't mind being wrong. But I doubt I am.

SISTER JAMES. Then what's to be done?

SISTER ALOYSIUS. I don't know.

SISTER JAMES. You'll know what to do.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. I don't know what to do. There are parameters which protect him and hinder me.

SISTER JAMES. But he can't be safe if it's established. I doubt he

could recover from the shame.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. What have you seen?

SISTER JAMES. I don't know.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. What have you seen?

SISTER JAMES. He took Donald to the rectory.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. What for?

SISTER JAMES. A talk.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. Alone?

SISTER JAMES. Yes.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. When?

SISTER JAMES. A week ago.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. Why didn't you tell me?

SISTER JAMES. I didn't think there was anything wrong with it. It never came into my mind that he ... that there could be anything wrong.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. Of all the children. Donald Muller. I suppose it makes sense.

SISTER JAMES. How does it make sense?

SISTER ALOYSIUS. He's isolated. The little sheep lagging behind is the one the wolf goes for.

SISTER JAMES. I don't know that anything's wrong!

SISTER ALOYSIUS. Our first Negro student. I thought there'd be fighting, a parent or two to deal with ... I should've foreseen this possibility.

SISTER JAMES. How could you imagine it?

SISTER ALOYSIUS. It is my job to outshine the fox in cleverness! That's my job!

SISTER JAMES. But maybe it's nothing!

SISTER ALOYSIUS. Then why do you look like you've seen the Devil?

SISTER JAMES. It's just the way the boy acted when he came back to class.

SISTER ALOYSIUS. He said something?

SISTER JAMES. No. It was his expression. He looked frightened and ... he put his head on the desk in the most peculiar way. (*Struggles.*) And one other thing. I think there was alcohol on his breath. There was alcohol on his breath. (*Sister Aloysius looks toward the rectory.*)

SISTER ALOYSIUS. Eight years ago at St. Boniface we had a priest who had to be stopped. But I had Monsignor Scully then ... whom I could rely on. Here, there's no man I can go to, and men