

Doubt

Side 1: MRS. MULLER and SISTER ALOYSIUS

MRS. MULLER

Not to be disagreeing with you, but if we're talking about something floating around between this priest and my son, that ain't my son's fault.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

I'm not suggesting it is.

MRS. MULLER

He's just a boy.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

I know.

MRS. MULLER

Twelve years old. If somebody should be taking blame for anything, it should be *the man, not the boy*.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

I agree with you completely.

MRS. MULLER

You're agreeing with me but I'm sitting in the principal's office talking about my son. Why isn't the priest in the principal's office, if you know what I'm saying and you'll excuse my bringing it up.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

You're here because I'm concerned about Donald's welfare.

MRS. MULLER

You think I'm not?

SISTER ALOYSIUS

Of course you are.

MRS. MULLER

Let me ask you something. You honestly think that priest gave Donald that wine to drink?

SISTER ALOYSIUS

Yes, I do.

MRS. MULLER

Then how come my son got kicked off the altar boys if it was the man that gave it to him?

SISTER ALOYSIUS

The boy got caught, the man didn't.

MRS. MULLER

How come the priest didn't get kicked off the priesthood?

SISTER ALOYSIUS

He's a grown man, educated. And he knows what's at stake. It's not so easy to pin someone like that down.

MRS. MULLER

So you give my son the whole blame. No problem my son getting blamed and punished. That's easy. You know why that is?

SISTER ALOYSIUS

Perhaps you should let me talk. I think you're getting upset.

MRS. MULLER

That's because that's the way it is. You're just finding out about it, but that's the way it is and the way it's been, Sister. You're not going against no man in a robe and win, Sister. He's got the position.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

And he's got your son.

MRS. MULLER

Let him have 'im then.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

What?

MRS. MULLER

It's just till June.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

Do you know what you're saying?

Side 2: FLYNN and SISTER ALOYSIUS

FLYNN
Mortal sin?

SISTER ALOYSIUS
Yes.

FLYNN
And?

SISTER ALOYSIUS
I confessed it! Did you give Donald Muller wine to drink?

FLYNN
Whatever I have done, I have left in the healing hands of my confessor. As have you!
We are the same!

SISTER ALOYSIUS
We are not the same! A dog rhat bites is a dog chat bites! I do not justify what I do wrong and go on. I admit it, desist, and take my medicine. Did you give Donald Muller wine to drink?

FLYNN
No.

SISTER ALOYSIUS
Mental reservation?

FLYNN
No.

SISTER ALOYSIUS
You lie. Very well then. If you won't leave my office, I will. And once I go, I will not stop.
(She goes to the door. Suddenly, a new tone comes into his voice.)

FLYNN
Wait!

SISTER ALOYSIUS

You will request a transfer from this parish. You will take a leave of absence until it is granted.

FLYNN

And do what for the love of God? My life is here.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

Don't.

FLYNN

Please! Are we people? Am I a person flesh and blood like you? Or are we just ideas and convictions. I can't say everything. Do you understand? There are things I can't say. Even if you can't imagine the explanation, Sister, remember that there are circumstances beyond your knowledge. Even if you feel certainty, it is an emotion and not a fact. In the spirit of charity, I appeal to you. On behalf of my life's work. You have to behave responsibly. I put myself in your hands.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

I don't want you.

FLYNN

My reputation is at stake.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

You can preserve your reputation.

FLYNN

If you say these things, I won't be able to do my work in the community.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

Your work in the community should be discontinued.

FLYNN

You'd leave me with nothing.

SISTER ALOYSIUS

That's not true. It's Donald Muller who has nothing, and you took full advantage of that.

FLYNN

I have not done anything wrong. I care about that boy very much.

Side 3: SISTER ALOYSIUS and SISTER JAMES

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 seep 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.