

Ten Steps

By Michael Leathers

CAST: 2 males

Cal: An eager amateur, desperate to win at bowling, no matter what. 20s to 30s.

Robert: Patient friend who's tutored Cal on the fine arts of bowling. 20s to 30s.

RUN TIME: 5 minutes

PROPS

- Shoes and wristband for Robert
- Sweat suit for Cal

STORY

Cal has been learning the fine art of bowling from his friend, Robert. Although still a beginner, Cal has grown tired of losing to his experienced friend. Cal develops his own delivery method to ensure he has an edge when he bowls. His method, however, breaks the rules. Like Cal, many of us like to justify dancing around the foul line.

THEMES

Integrity. Excuses. Rationalization. Sin.

Ten Steps

(We're at a bowling alley. ROBERT is on stage, putting on his shoes and his wristband to get ready for a few games of bowling. CAL enters, wearing a sweat suit and punching at the air like he's Rocky Balboa gearing up for da big fight. He struts over to ROBERT, who isn't quite sure what to make of this spectacle.)

ROBERT

(Mildly sarcastic)

Where's the fight, Rocky?

CAL

Hey, if you wanna win, you gotta get in the zone.

ROBERT

Work's stressful enough. Can't we just bowl for fun?

CAL

That's how you win, isn't it? Convincing me you don't care if you win or not.

ROBERT

Because I don't care.

CAL

Yet you win every week, don't you now?

ROBERT

This is just like work and everything else with you. You're taking this game way too seriously.

CAL

Or maybe not seriously enough.

ROBERT

Fine. We won't keep score. Let's just bowl.

CAL

What's the matter? Chicken?

ROBERT

I'm not chicken.

CAL

You oughta be. While you were out of town last week, I've been here every night. Practicing.

ROBERT

Every night?

CAL

Practicing. And all day Saturday and Sunday.

ROBERT

You don't find that ... obsessive?

CAL

Obsessive? Was Shakespeare obsessed when he penned "Pilgrim's Progress"?

ROBERT

Actually –

CAL

-- And what about Benjamin Franklin? Did people call him obsessed when he tried for the bazillionth time to illuminate his light bulb?

ROBERT

Franklin didn't –

CAL

-- The greatest musicians throughout history. Were they obsessed? No. It was their drive, their unyielding determination, that propelled them to greatness. Where would civilization be without the classics of Mozart, Bach, Rachmaninov, Manilow?

ROBERT

Look, I – ... Manilow?

CAL

Is there a problem?

ROBERT

No, no problem, but ... Manilow?

CAL

You ... are a philistine. Can we get back to the game?

ROBERT

Sure, and later, let's hop over to the Copa.

CAL

(Ignoring him)

While you were away, I have perfected my delivery.

ROBERT

Are you still using the four-step method like I taught you?

CAL

I abandoned that. I have my own, more refined method.

ROBERT

What? Three steps? Five?

CAL

Ten.

END OF SAMPLE

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