

THE BITCH

The man, off camera, signalled to the host of the T.V. show. "Five, four, three..." then he went quiet, but showed two fingers, then one, finally pointing to Charlie Booth to begin.

"Good evening." Charlie smiled into the camera showing perfect white teeth. "Tonight we are talking to Tim Barlow, the famous British actor, who has just won an Oscar for his tremendous portrayal of Daniel Fitz, a prison guard who brutally beats an inmate on death row." He turned to face his guest, a tall, thin man with deep set eyes, short brown hair and a long nose, whose wide smile lifted his chiselled features into a look that spoke of mischief.

"Welcome, Tim," he said.

"Thank you, Charlie; I'm very pleased to be here."

"Now tell me, Tim," began Charlie in his very serious voice, "How did you study for such a role as Daniel Fitz?"

"I was given extensive access to several guards, who talked about their lives working in a prison and the violence that occurs inside those walls," replied Tim, "plus I was allowed to shadow them in their work, which was quite eye-opening."

"In that dramatic scene where you beat a man almost to death, how did you find that raw emotion, especially during the close up of just your face, where you don't make a sound, but you convey everything?" Charlie asked.

"That was very difficult, Charlie," admitted Tim, "I had to go deep inside myself and find that dark, nasty place that we all have and bring it to the surface."

"Did you have any events in your life that you could draw on for this scene?" Questioned Charlie, looking into the actor's dark eyes and wondering what was really in his soul.

"As a matter of fact, I did," answered Tim, "It happened when I was ten and at primary school." He paused as if collecting his thoughts, and then continued, looking off to the side as if the events were unfolding in front of his eyes.

"I was a small, scrawny kid, from a very poor family," he said, "and not that interested in school; a bit of a pest really." Both men chuckled. "The teacher, Miss Messenger; I'll never forget her name, really had it in for me."

"You mean she was abusive?" asked Charlie, slightly shocked.

“She would call me names, constantly belittle me in front of the class and give me a swat around the ear most days generally making my life hell.” Tim closed his eyes for a moment. “One morning in class, she had been on my case more than usual,” remembered Tim, “railing on at me about what an idiot I was because I couldn’t do a math problem.” He cleared his throat and began again. “My good mate, Willie, said a phrase that his dad used to say to his mum when they were having a fight.”

“What was that?” Charlie leaned forward, his interest peaked.

Tim hissed the words, “Bleeding Bitch!”

“My God, what did she say?” Charlie felt a smile tug at the corner of his mouth.

“At first she said nothing, but her face registered utter shock,” answered Tim, “then it blushed red, as if an explosion had happened deep in her veins.” Tim reached for his glass of water and took a few sips. “Her eyes seemed to bug out of her sockets and a vein in her forehead pulsed to some angry beat.”

“What happened next?” Charlie was quite intrigued by the story.

“She grabbed Willie by the back of his neck and threw him over a desk,” replied Tim, “then she yanked his trousers down along with his underpants and grabbing a ruler she proceeded to beat him over and over and over again.”

“What did you do?” Charlie asked anxiously.

“Nothing. I couldn’t take my eyes off her face,” admitted Tim, “it wasn’t just the rage that terrified me, but the obvious enjoyment of hurting someone that chilled me to my core, yet in some strange way it excited me.”

“So you tried to find that kind of sick emotion in yourself for this role?” Charlie asked horrified.

“We all have it,” answered Tim, “we just normally keep it in check.”

Charlie turned to the camera.

“At this point we have to take a break, but when we return, I want to ask Tim more about his role, and also about the leading lady he married, and then divorced.”

As Tim smiled into the camera, he muttered under his breath, “Another bleeding bitch!”

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