

Sick Note

"Grand Guignol meets Phys Ed as cricket bat meets Ken's head."

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EXT. A PARK - DAY

A clump of leafy bushes. The sound of birdsong competes with the happy shouts and laughter of unseen children and the occasional burst of a referee's whistle.

Slowly moving towards the bushes, another sound can be heard: heavy breathing. Fast, heavy breathing.

Angle: we are behind the bush and close on a head clad in an ice-hockey mask, *Friday 13th*-style. The breathing is coming from beneath the skull-like mask.

A shadow falls on this mysterious figure.

VOICE (O.S.)

Timothy!

The figure turns suddenly.

Angle: now we can see the masked figure is small; child-sized in fact. This is TIMOTHY, aged eleven. In addition to the mask he wears a generic blue soccer shirt, white soccer shorts and soccer boots.

Towering over him is a tall, burly man wearing a green tracksuit and holding a hockey stick. He is in early middle age. This is MR. GLOVER, a P.E. (phys-ed) teacher.

MR. GLOVER

Why are you hiding in there? What have you got on your face?

TIMOTHY

(muffled, barely audible)

Hockey mask.

MR. GLOVER

What? Take it off, lad.

Timothy takes the mask off.

TIMOTHY

It's a hockey mask sir.

MR. GLOVER

You big nancy! We're playing field hockey. It's a man's game, lad. If you want to ponce about a field wearing armour, move to America where the rest of the girly-men live.

He blows his whistle.

Angle: there is a field hockey game being played in front of the bush. The boys stop their game and look over at Mr. Glover and Timothy.

MR. GLOVER (cont'd)
 Look at this, boys! Timothy wants
 to wear a mask!
 (leaning right in to
 Timothy's face)
 If it's padding you're after I
 suggest you get a new bra, you
 disgusting pink sack of runny
 cholesterol.

Everybody laughs at Timothy, who looks at his feet and soaks up the derision. Eventually he looks up again, and holds out a folded-up piece of paper.

TIMOTHY
 I have a note. I have a note from
 my mum. I'm excused this
 afternoon because I feel sick...

Mr. Glover plucks the note from Timothy's hand and throws it to the ground.

MR. GLOVER
 Get on that pitch you quivering
 amoeba!

Timothy turns and runs towards the pitch. Mr. Glover puts a ball on the ground, swings his hockey stick and manages to hit Timothy on the back of the head. Timothy falls to the ground.

Everybody laughs once more. Timothy has fallen next to his note. He picks it up, unfolds it.

Close on the note. It is worn, faded and dog-eared. It reads: "Timothy is excused this afternoon because he is sick."

Pull back to reveal we are now in...

INT. A LIVING ROOM - DAY

...and the note is being held, and studied intently, by the ADULT TIMOTHY, in his twenties now, who sits in an armchair.

Behind the armchair is a shelf overflowing with sporting cups and trophies, all shiny. Timothy looks up at these and smiles. He folds up the note.

He hears the SOUND of a key being turned in a lock. He smiles again and gets out of the chair.

As Timothy walks across the room we hear the front door open, then close.

Framed posters commemorating various sporting events adorn the walls. There is a cricket bat leaning against a sofa. Timothy picks it up and slings it casually over his shoulder.

He is nearly at the living room door when it opens, to reveal what is unmistakably an OLDER MR. GLOVER, who looks incredibly surprised.

MR. GLOVER

What? What are you doing in my house?

Timothy swings the bat at Mr. Glover's head.

CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. MR. GLOVER'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Mr. Glover is tied to a wooden chair. He has a big bruise on his forehead.

The room is darkened - the curtains are drawn.

Sitting opposite Mr. Glover is Timothy. The cricket bat lays across his lap.

TIMOTHY

Hello.

Mr. Glover starts to struggle but his bonds are too tight.

MR. GLOVER

Who the fucking hell are you?

TIMOTHY

I'm Timothy.

MR. GLOVER

Yeah? You look like a Timothy. Do I know you?

TIMOTHY

You taught me P.E.

MR. GLOVER

I doubt that.

TIMOTHY

It's true.

MR. GLOVER

The way you wafted that bat? Any pupil of mine'd know to turn the wrists and let the pace of my head do the hard work.

TIMOTHY

What, like this?

He swings the bat at Mr. Glover's head again.

CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. MR. GLOVER'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Mr. Glover comes to again. His head is bloodier, and he has a black eye.

MR. GLOVER

No! Not like that. You swing like a pansy.

Timothy is becoming agitated.

TIMOTHY

Shut up.

MR. GLOVER

Holding the bat like you're scared of it. I never taught you that, you perfumed nonce.

TIMOTHY

Shut up.

MR. GLOVER

Do you hold your boyfriend like that?

TIMOTHY

SHUT UP!

He swings the bat again.

CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. MR. GLOVER'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Mr. Glover awakens with a start, blood streaming from his nose.

MR. GLOVER

You useless great prancing
jessie. I bet I've not been
unconscious longer than ten
minutes. It's the grip, you
flowery ladyboy. Your grip's all
wrong. What's your game, son?
'Cause it obviously isn't
cricket.

TIMOTHY

I had a note.

Mr. Glover stares blankly.

TIMOTHY (cont'd)

I had a note. I was excused but
you still made me play.

MR. GLOVER

You'd better hit me again because
you're making no sense.

TIMOTHY

I didn't want to play hockey but
you made me play hockey but you
shouldn't have because I! Had! A!
Note!

Timothy pulls the note out and shows it to Mr. Glover.

MR. GLOVER

This note isn't signed.

TIMOTHY

What?

MR. GLOVER

This note. It isn't signed. I
can't excuse you from games if
the note isn't signed. It's not
dated either.

TIMOTHY

My mum... She was busy that
morning.

MR. GLOVER

That's not my problem.

TIMOTHY

She just had time to write
this...

MR. GLOVER
 It's not my problem. If your note
 isn't signed you aren't excused,
 lad! Now get on the pitch and
 play hockey!

Timothy screams.

TIMOTHY
 Aaaagh! I didn't bring my kit!

MR. GLOVER
 (shouting)
 THEN YOU'LL DO IT IN YOUR
 UNDERWEAR!

TIMOTHY
 NO!

He swings the bat again.

CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. MR. GLOVER'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Mr. Glover awakens with a start. His nose is mashed and
 both eyes are black.

MR. GLOVER
 Better. You might not like my
 methods but I get results. That
 was a good, cross-batted sweep
 shot. You can't argue with that.
 Well done.

TIMOTHY
 You think?

MR. GLOVER
 Oh yes.

He spits out some blood.

MR. GLOVER (cont'd)
 You came in low, rolled your
 wrists. Textbook.

TIMOTHY
 It did feel more comfortable.

MR. GLOVER
 Try it again.

Timothy looks at the bat, then at Mr. Glover. He swings again.

CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. MR. GLOVER'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Mr. Glover is still tied to the chair, but now he is horizontal, on the floor. His head lies in a pool of blood.

He awakens with a start.

MR. GLOVER

Nah, that was shit. That last one must have been a fluke. You always were a useless little la-de-da poofter.

Timothy swings the bat and hits Mr. Glover's body with a crunch.

MR. GLOVER (cont'd)

Useless! Bring your leading foot in more.

He swings again. Crunch.

MR. GLOVER (cont'd)

Wrong! Your centre of gravity is all over the place! Try again, jellyboy.

He swings again. Crunch.

MR. GLOVER (cont'd)

Slice! It's killing me, lad, watching your pathetic excuse for a swing. We're gonna be here all day.

Timothy squats down.

TIMOTHY

I'm doing my best.

MR. GLOVER

Lad, it's not often I say this, but I give up on you. You're never going to learn to use that thing properly.

TIMOTHY

What do you suggest?

MR. GLOVER

Listen, there's a key hanging up
in the kitchen - get that, and go
out to the garden shed...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. MR. GLOVER'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Close on Mr. Glover, still tied to the chair but upright
once more.

MR. GLOVER

Tug on it, you soppo wet
meringue. Not like that! It's not
a needle and thread. Yank it,
lad, yank it!

There is the sound of a small engine turning over, then
stalling.

Angle: Timothy has a chainsaw and is trying to get it
started.

MR. GLOVER (cont'd)

I suppose you'd be happier with a
nail file, you effete dandelion.

Timothy yanks hard on the starter rope: the chainsaw chugs
into life.

He holds it low to the ground and begins to advance on Mr.
Glover.

MR. GLOVER (cont'd)

Not underarm! If you're going to
come at someone with a chainsaw,
it's overarm. Give me strength!

Timothy screams and lifts the chainsaw over his head. He
topples over backwards.

MR. GLOVER (cont'd)

Fine, we'll play ladies' rules,
underarm it is. Get up you soggy
mincing fairycake! Let's play
ball!

Timothy struggles to his feet and advances once more.

CUT TO:

INT. MR. GLOVER'S HALLWAY - LATER

Timothy is on the phone. He is covered from head to toe in gore. Blood is spattered up the wall behind him.

TIMOTHY
Hello, police? There's been an...
Incident.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE MR. GLOVER'S HOUSE - LATER

A police car has pulled up on the street outside the house.

A uniformed POLICEMAN, notebook in hand, stands on the garden path next to the blood-drenched Timothy.

POLICEMAN
So, let me get this straight.
You've killed the owner of this
property, a Mr... (he reads from
the notebook) Glover, is that
right?

TIMOTHY
Yes.

POLICEMAN
And now you just want us to let
you go?

TIMOTHY
I've got a note. I'm excused.

POLICEMAN
Yeah... Let's see this note.

Timothy produces the note, unfolds it, and hands it over.

The policeman studies it.

POLICEMAN (cont'd)
(reading)
"Timothy is excused this
afternoon because he is sick"

TIMOTHY
I *am* sick.

The policeman looks Timothy up and down.

POLICEMAN

Can't argue with that. But I'm afraid I can't just let you go, sunshine.

TIMOTHY

But I've got a note.

POLICEMAN

This note... It isn't signed. Anyone could have written it. It's not dated either. No, I think we'll have to take you in.

A SECOND POLICEMAN emerges from the house and walks down the path.

SECOND POLICEMAN

Fuck me, it's like a meat feast pizza in there, hold the cheese.

POLICEMAN

Did you identify the victim?

SECOND POLICEMAN

Yeah, it's one Ken Glover, retired P.E. Teacher.

POLICEMAN

P.E. Teacher?

His eyes narrow, and he gazes into the middle distance.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE

A series of vignettes featuring a young child in a small policeman's helmet and a burly middle-aged man in a red tracksuit:

- 1) the child is hit by a succession of ping pong balls fired from the bat of the P.E. Teacher.
- 2) the P.E. Teacher launches a series of crunching tackles at the child on a soccer pitch.
- 3) the P.E. Teacher leaps over a tennis net and runs, pointing and taunting, towards the child, who is surrounded by tennis balls and holding a tennis racket that dwarfs him.
- 4) the P.E. Teacher and child by a swimming pool. The teacher points at the pool. The child shakes its head.

The teacher seems to concur, walks away, then turns and runs towards the child, arms out ready to push...

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE MR. GLOVER'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The policeman gazes into space.

SFX: the sound of someone falling into a swimming pool.

He snaps out of it. He looks down at the note, and then at Timothy.

POLICEMAN

All right, you're excused. Just this once, mind. Next time you make sure you get it signed, all right?

TIMOTHY

So I can..?

POLICEMAN

You're excused. Go on, get yourself home.

Timothy walks down the path, through the gate. He looks back.

POLICEMAN (cont'd)

Go on.

Timothy quickly scurries away, leaving glistening red footprints as he goes.

The second policeman looks confused.

POLICEMAN (cont'd)

He had a note.

SECOND POLICEMAN

Oh, right.

They both make their way back into the house.

FADE TO BLACK.

END.