

## **“Aim for the Fence”**

by  
Cierra Winkler

- What** In this monologue, a young man recalls his dad's struggles and successes as a single father and considers the importance of prayer in the lives of his own family as he watches his son's first t-ball game.
- Themes:** Comedy, Parenting, Fatherhood, Father's Day, Single Parent, Sons, Prayer
- Who** Barry– 20's-30's, father of one young son
- When** Present
- Wear (Props)** Jeans, Tee, and Baseball Cap
- Why** Philippians 4:6-7, Ephesians 6: 1-4; Proverbs 22:6
- How** Barry switches between watching/commenting on his son's tee-ball game and addressing the audience. This imaginary game can be located just beyond the audience or down stage right or left. Just make sure your character's facial expressions, movement, and dialogue volume help the audience follow the action of the game along with you. Dialogue addressed to the audience should be delivered in an excited but conversational tone.
- Time** Approximately 5 minutes

*Lights up. Barry enters wearing jeans, t-shirt, and a baseball cap. He switches between addressing the audience and watching/commenting on his son's tee-ball game. This imaginary game can be located just beyond the audience or down stage right or left.*

**Barry:** *(clapping and shouting as he watches his son, who's up to bat)* Alright Ray! Let's go! You can do it! Remember, keep your eye on the ball, Son! Just like we practiced! Aiming for the fence...

*Barry watches the pitch leave the pitcher's hand and sail past his son and into the catcher's mitt.*

Ray! Ray! Turn it around, son! Turn...turn the bat around! *(beat)* What do you mean, 'what bat'? The baseball bat! The bat in your hands! You're supposed to hit the ball with the bigger end...Okay, okay, here it comes! Get ready! Aim for the fence!

*He watches the strike sail past his son again.*

Ohhhh man, so close! Hey, nice swing buddy! Nice swing! Now, this time, try to swing before the ump says 'striiiiike!', okay? Alright, you can do it! Here it comes! Remember, swing for the fence!

*Barry cringes as he follows the pitch into the catcher's mitt, then stands up and claps anyway.*

Hey, good try, Ray! That was a good swing, buddy! Aiming for the fence. We'll get 'em next time! Good try.

*Barry switches his attention to the audience. He addresses the audience as if they are fellow spectators of the game. Can't help but show pride in his son.*

Man, did you see the way he followed through on that one? He almost made contact. If his arms were maybe two feet longer...I'm Barry, by the way. And that's Ray, my son. Well, I mean, obviously. Only a dad is allowed to embarrass his kid like that in front of all these people, right? Oh look! There he is! Looks like coach is sending him to right field...  
*(returns attention to the game)* Ray, Ray! Get your glove, Son! You forgot your glove! Can't defend right field without your glove!

*Turns his attention back to the audience.*

Yep, that's my boy. Look at him—he's so eager to get out there that he forgot his glove. Oh, I know he's got a lot to learn before the big leagues, but it's his first tee-ball game ever and I can't help but be proud of him. It's a brave thing, you know, trying something new for the first time. Getting your hands dirty, making mistakes in front of a big crowd, learning the rules of the game. It isn't easy, but I'm just excited that it's something we can work on together, you know?

This has been a real learning experience for me, too. Oh, I mean the parenting thing, not baseball. I grew up with this game. Pitched for years until my shoulder gave out in college. But it was here...this very field, where I would listen as my dad encouraged me from the sidelines. He would stand right there, right where you're sitting, and cheer until my face turned red with embarrassment. And then when mom passed away, he made sure I kept up my grades, stayed in church, and he even agreed to pay for tuba lessons my Freshman year. That didn't last long. I think I learned just enough of 'Bohemian Rhapsody' to make him realize his mistake. One morning I woke up and found a ten-dollar bill under my pillow and a note from the tooth fairy thanking me for the donation to the middle-school band. But I'm totally over it, now. I'm over it.

*Barry chuckles, then pauses.*

Wow. If I only knew then what I know now. If only I knew the sacrifices my dad made. You know, being a single parent wasn't easy. I mean, my wife and I can work together, encourage each other, and pray for each other. But Dad? He just had to step up to the plate! He had to be the breadwinner and the homemaker, the comforter and the rule-maker, and mechanic and the handyman...I mean, I don't know how he did it all! *(Pauses and smiles)* Well, actually, I do. Every night I would lie in bed and listen to my dad's muffled voice coming through the wall. He was on his knees, talking to God. He prayed for strength to provide for me. He prayed for courage to be a Godly role model for me...but most of all, he prayed for love and wisdom, so that he could be a father who leads his son to Jesus. And God answered that prayer.

*(beat)* Is there any greater honor for a dad than to pray for his kids? Is there anything else more important than inviting God into this trial-and-error business of parenting? Into morning rushes, tee-ball games, and bedtime stories? Into the daily-ness of it all?

I'm just so thankful that Jesus actually wants to be involved in my family. We don't have to face the good, the bad, and the ugly of raising a mini human being all by ourselves! And with Ray, I need all the help I can get...

*Barry suddenly turns his attention back to the game. A look of panic crosses his face and he waves his arms in the air.*

Ray! No, no, Ray stop! The port-a-potties are beside the concession stand! Go to the port-a-potties!

*(beat)* OK, well, at least turn around! No no no no no! Oh man...

*Barry sighs.*

"Aim for the Fence"

*Looks up.* PURCHASE

Well, he did aim for the fence...

Lord, we've got our work cut out for us...

*Lights out.*

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