

22. Copycat Kids

(Girl)

1 Every summer I volunteer to work at Vacation Bible
 2 School. It's pretty fun, and I get to be the boss of about
 3 twenty little first graders. It's better than baby duty where
 4 you have to change diapers and get puked on. Every other
 5 year I've had to be the helper for the adult. This year,
 6 though, either they were desperate, or they've grown to
 7 trust me because they put me in charge of the whole group.
 8 I actually had someone helping me! It was awesome. Those
 9 kids followed me around the place like a bunch of little
 10 ducklings. Everything I did, they did. Like a continuous
 11 game of copycat.

12 It was cute at first. Like twenty little mini-mes. Quite a
 13 compliment, really, that they wanted to be so much like me.
 14 But then the worst possible thing that could ever happen
 15 happened! I was pouring the red Kool-aid for their snack. I
 16 had on my favorite white shirt. The pitcher slipped from my
 17 hands ... and a bad word slipped from my mouth.

18 All of their little faces registered complete shock. Which
 19 actually is better than what happened next. See, all of my
 20 little mini-mes started saying the bad word — over and over
 21 — like a chant! I don't know if they knew what it was or not,
 22 but they knew from my face that it wasn't something I
 23 wanted them to say! Which just made them say it more.
 24 The more I hushed them, the louder they got until they were
 25 practically screaming the bad word at the tops of their
 26 lungs. Even the cute little girl in pigtails who never spoke a
 27 single word all week was screaming it out.
 28 It didn't take long for the Children's Director to find out.

1 Probably had twenty sets of parents calling her all night.
 2 She met me at the door the next night. Now I'm a helper in
 3 the nursery. With the babies who can't talk. (Shrugs.) I don't
 4 really blame her ... but I sure will miss all those little mini-
 5 mes!