ABOUT TIME

by

Dino A. Barlaam

Contact Information:

Dino A. Barlaam
DBarlaam99@aol.com
(908) 591-9886
Registered with WGAe
INT. BASEMENT LABORATORY - NIGHT

A cramped basement that’s been converted into an inventor’s workspace. Gadgets, gizmos, wires and other various electronic devices fill the room.

But they are nothing compared to the sleek, silver TIME MACHINE in the center.

DONALD CROWN, early 60s, tightens a screw on the side of the time machine. He then grabs a handkerchief and wipes his brow. He wears glasses and a Mets baseball cap.

WILLIAM “BILLY” CROWN, 27, trudges down the steps into the basement.

DONALD
Billy! Come here!

Billy approaches his father.

DONALD (CONT’D)
This is it. The big one. I’ve finally done it.

BILLY
Why’re you wasting your time with this stuff? You’re an I.T. guy, not—

DONALD
This is no longer just a hobby, son. This is revolutionary.

BILLY
What is it? A freezer on wheels?

He puts an arm around Billy.

DONALD
No. It’s a time machine.

BILLY
Come on, dad. For real.

DONALD
This is for real.

BILLY
You’re not funny.

DONALD
We can have first hand accounts of major historical events. Or see what the future has in store.
BILLY
Like the Jetsons?

DONALD
Don’t be a wiseguy.

BILLY
C’mon, dad. Time travel?

Donald walks behind the time machine and rummages through some boxes and files.

BILLY (CONT’D)
You see my iPod? I can’t find it anywhere.

His dad returns holding a small MANILA ENVELOPE. It’s labeled “DONALD CROWN. TRIP #3.” He hands it to Billy.

BILLY (CONT’D)
What’s this?

DONALD
Open it.

Billy opens the envelope. Inside he finds a PHOTOGRAPH

Billy takes out the photo and holds it closer under the light. It’s a photo of President Kennedy’s assassination, taken from street level.

BILLY
So?

DONALD
What’s it look like?

BILLY
Did you cut this out from our encyclopedia? Mom’s gonna be mad.

DONALD
Nope. That’s one of a kind. Taken by yours truly this morning.

BILLY
You’re really taking this practical joke all the way, aren’t you?
DONALD
I had to test it. Of course I started with inanimate objects, then a video camera. They came back fine, so I tried it myself.

BILLY
If this was even possible, which I’m still not falling for, why didn’t you stop this from happening? Or any other tragic event in history? Try to make right what once went wrong?

DONALD
Not a good idea. Even with the best intentions, the consequences could be dire.

BILLY
Right.

DONALD
Aren’t you curious?

BILLY
I live in the present.

DONALD
Suit yourself.

BILLY
So, now what?

DONALD
My next trip tomorrow will be about fifty, maybe a hundred years into the future. See what’s to come.

BILLY
I’m finally moving out this weekend. Don’t blow the house up until after I’m gone.

DONALD
Good night, son.

BILLY
Night, dad.

Billy climbs the staircase. His dad returns to inspecting the time machine.
INT. MCNALLY’S BAR & GRILL – NIGHT

Billy and EUGENE, 26, thin with glasses, sit at the bar. Billy takes a swig of his beer.

BILLY
Come on, Gene. If you could time travel, where would you go? I mean, when?

EUGENE
Dude. Why talk about stuff that’s not possible? You see that hot waitress over there? Maybe we should get a table.

BILLY
Just answer the question.

Eugene gulps down his beer.

EUGENE
I don’t know. Definitely not the past. High school sucked. Remember Hank Romano?

BILLY
“Hank the Tank”? He works at a gym in the city now, I hear.

EUGENE
Picked on all of us big time back in the day.

BILLY
Him and that fat friend of his. What was his name?

EUGENE
Tommy? Timmy? I forget. Bygones, right?

Eugene gets a good look at the attractive BLONDE WAITRESS as she passes by.

BILLY
Right.

EUGENE
Maybe I’d check out the future. See if it turns out like Blade Runner. Those flying cars were friggin’ awesome.
BILLY
You smoke something before you got here?

EUGENE
Your the one asking the weird questions, man. Sounding a little like your dad. No offense. How’s he doing, by the way?

BILLY
He’s fine. Just fine.

Billy finishes his beer.

INT. BILLY’S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Billy flips through his middle school and high school yearbooks.

In his high school yearbook, he stops on a PHOTO of HENRY “HANK” ROMANO, 17. A tough-looking kid with a blonde crew cut.

Billy then turns back a few pages and finds the PHOTO of himself at 13.

He closes the yearbook and tosses it aside.

INT. BILLY’S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Billy sleeps in his bed. He tosses and turns, until he finally wakes up. He checks the time on his ALARM CLOCK: 2:15 A.M.

He climbs out of bed.

INT. BASEMENT LABORATORY – LATER

Billy quietly makes his way down the steps. The stairs CREEK. He walks up to the time machine.

BILLY
Old man’s really lost it this time.

He shakes his head and turns to the staircase.

The young man glances back to the time machine. He moves closer.
He flips the main POWER SWITCH. LIGHTS on the panels come to life. The machine emits a LOW HUM.

He OPENS the hatch and peeks inside.

EXT. EAST COAST MUSIC STORE - EARLY MORNING (3 WEEKS AGO)

Billy stands in front of the entrance. Behind him are about THIRTY YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN in their late teens and twenties.

A sign on the door reads: "ROLLINS BAND TICKETS SOLD HERE".

STONER
How early you get here for tickets?

BILLY
About five minutes before you, friend. When they went on sale the first time, I overslept. Now I’ll be able to go. Killer.

STONER
This is the first time these tickets are being sold. What’re you--?

The TATTOOED SALES CLERK opens the door.

BILLY
YES!

INT. MAIN STREET GRILL - DAY (7 YEARS AGO)

At a table in the crowded deli/restaurant, Billy enjoys an overstuffed Philly Cheesesteak sandwich.

BILLY
Mmm. A crime this place ever closed down.
(to the deli clerk)
Joe, better get me one for the road. Make that two.

EXT. UPSCALE SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT (4 YEARS AGO)

Billy rushes up the front steps and RINGS the doorbell. He’s panting. DAVID, late 20s, soon OPENS the door.
BILLY
Dave! Wow. It's been a while.

DAVID
I just dropped you off.

BILLY
Oh, right.

DAVID
Did you change your clothes?

BILLY
Just listen. First, religion's about faith. It's what a person gets out of it that's important.

DAVID
Really.

BILLY
Second, your condescending attitude's the reason why me and the guys always teased you and why my ex, Jessica, hated your guts.

DAVID
You said she was just shy.

BILLY
I lied. And finally, I hate "Stargate". Whenever you went on about that show, I wanted to jump off a cliff.

DAVID
Whatever. Anything else?

BILLY
Nope. That's it. Whew! Been waiting a long time to get that out. After you moved, I never had the chance.

DAVID
I'm not moving.

BILLY
Not yet.

DAVID
What?

Billy looks at his watch.
BILLY
Look at the time. Gotta run.
Later, Dave.

EXT. MILTON AVENUE - PARKING LOT - DAY (15 YEARS EARLIER)
A beautiful autumn day on a quiet suburban street.

12-YEAR-OLD BILLY, wearing glasses and his hair neatly combed back, stands with his back up against a brick wall. EUGENE, 11, skinny and awkward, stands next to Billy just as nervous.

Before them stands HANK ROMANO, 16, and a CHUBBY TEEN.

HANK
Where you two girls going?

12-YEAR-OLD BILLY
Um, home.

HANK
"Um, home." Pathetic. How much you got?

EUGENE
Here.

Eugene and Billy each take out some change and a few dollars from their pockets.

Hank takes the money, looks at it, and throws it to the ground.

HANK
I can’t buy shit with this.

The Chubby Teen SPITS in Eugene’s face.

Hank grabs Billy’s shirt and PUNCHES him hard in the face.

Billy slams into the wall and falls to the ground. The Chubby Teen smirks.

Hank bends down and grabs Billy. He’s about to punch him again, when--

Adult Billy grabs Hank’s arm. Hank turns and looks up at him.

BILLY
Hank Romano?
HANK
Get the fuck off me.

Adult Billy lifts Hank up and throws him against the wall. He spins the punk around to face him and SMASHES HIS FIST into the teen's face.

The powerful punch knocks Hank to the ground. Young Billy and Eugene are stunned.

CHUBBY TEEN
Hey!

Adult Billy turns and gives the Chubby Teen a dirty look. The Chubby Teen runs away as fast as he can.

BILLY
God, it felt better than I thought it would. That hurt, Hank?

HANK
Ow, hell yeah.

BILLY
Awesome!

Young Billy and Eugene gather their belongings.

BILLY (CONT'D)
This loser won't bother you anymore. Will you?

HANK
No, sir.

12-YEAR-OLD BILLY
Thanks.

BILLY
My pleasure. By the way, get to know Melanie Cook sophomore year.

12-YEAR-OLD BILLY
Why?

BILLY
Trust me.

Adult Billy walks down the tree-lined street, whistling.

The two young boys watch him for a moment, then pick up their money, turn around and head in the opposite direction.

FADE OUT.