

BEWARE OF DOG

by

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. KYLE'S HOUSE: BACK YARD - DAY 1

KYLE, 12 yrs old, dressed in secondhand Walmart and toting a backpack, wheels his bicycle out of the rundown garage behind his bland and rundown house and locks the door.

He throws on his backpack and looks down the alley. A sense of foreboding. He hops on his bike and pedals away.

2 EXT. ALLEY 2

Kyle cycles a hundred yards or so, about to pass a yard with a chain link fence. A LOW GROWL IS HEARD...

Suddenly, a big, black and mean looking DOG lunges at the chain link fence, BARKING MADLY!

Instantly frightened, Kyle swerves sharply and falls onto the hard dirt roadway. He looks in fear as...

The Dog leaps repeatedly at the fence, barking -- insane hate. Only a thin nylon tether keeps him in the yard.

Kyle scrambles to his feet and jumps on the bike, lunges down hard... CLUNK!... The chain has come off.

Kyle looks down in horror. Panicky, he fumbles with the bike, turns it over, attempts to replace the chain.. tries his best to ignore the Dog.

The Dog just won't let up. The thin tether is stretched to the max.

KYLE
(yells)
Shaddup! Just shaddup, stupid dog!

The Dog continues barking and leaping at the fence.

Finally Kyle gets the chain back in place and hops on his bike, pedals away furiously.

3 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET 3

Kyle cycles out of the alley and stops. He looks up and down the street. Nobody around. Now he's mystified. A new sense of foreboding... he's in serious shit now.

Kyle wheels around and cycles down the street at top speed.

4

EXT. SCHOOLYARD - DAY

4

Kyle glides into the schoolyard toward the bike rack. The last of the remaining students enter the building.

A BULLY (14 yrs, punky) steps out in front of Kyle... with his 2 BULLYBOYS.

BULLY

You're late. I had to walk.

KYLE

Sorry man. My mom, she...

BULLY

I don't want no excuses! I had to walk!

BULLYBOY #1

He had to walk!

Kyle obediently gets off the bike and hands it to Bully.

BULLY

Well, it's no good to me now, is it?

BULLYBOY #1

Yeah, are you an idiot?

BULLY

And don't ever fuckin' "man" me. I'm not your fuckin' man! Got it? It's "sir" to you.

KYLE

Got it. Sir.

BULLY

You will be here after school. Precisely 4:30. You will take a pounding.

BULLYBOY #2

Fuckin' right.

5

INT. SCHOOLROOM - DAY

5

Kyle is the last to enter. The TEACHER (male, 40's) eyes him sternly as Kyle goes to take his seat.

TEACHER

Class starts at precisely 9 am, Mr. Callan. What time is it now?

KYLE

9:02

TEACHER

Nine o two. That's right. Mr. Callan, please drop off your homework on my desk, like everybody else.

There is a pile of papers on the desk. Kyle digs through his backpack... then panics. It's gone!

6 EXT. ALLEY - FLASHBACK 6

His notebook falls out of his backpack as he tumbles off the bike.

7 INT. SCHOOLROOM - RESUME 7

Kyle looks up from his backpack.

KYLE

It's gone... a dog made me... Um...

The CLASS laughs!

TEACHER

Really Mr. Callan? The oldest excuse in the book? Detention after school. You will stay until your homework is done.

Dejected, he takes his seat, wearily glances toward his only BUDDY, who gestures sympathetically.

8 INT. SCHOOLROOM - LATER 8

Kyle alone at his desk, doing his homework, pained. The teacher sits at his desk, marking papers.

Kyle looks up at the clock... 5:00. He dreads his future.

9 EXT. SCHOOLYARD - DAY 9

The yard is empty. His bike awaits at the lone bike rack. Kyle looks around. No Bullies. No one.

He quickly unlocks his bike and rides off.

10

EXT. STREET - DAY

10

Kyle pedals down the street toward his alley -- BULLY and his gang jump out from behind parked cars and stop him.

BULLY

The deal is I ride this bike from this alley to school and back or you get a fuckin' beatin'. So now that's two poundings I gotta give you. Get off.

Kyle gets off. The Bullyboys hold his bike as Bully steps forward.

KYLE

But I had a detention...

Bully suddenly punches Kyle, right in the face. Kyle goes down, nose bleeding.

The bullyboys drop his bike and jump on Kyle, landing a few body blows. Kyle cries. Bully laughs. Finally, Bully pulls the Bullyboys off him.

BULLY

Alright. We don't wanna kill the little shit.

(leans in to Kyle)

I don't like excuses. So tomorrow morning? Same time? Same channel? Be on time and I'll think about cancelling that 2nd beating. I'll think about it.

Bully joins the other two and they run off laughing.

Kyle slowly gets up and retrieves his bike.

11

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

11

Kyle pedals down the alley, approaches the yard with the chain link fence. He slows, looks on in trepidation...

He spots his notebook, haphazardly blown into the tall fence and hedge, directly across the alley from the Dog.

He attempts to be quick -- pedals up to the notebook...

The Dog suddenly goes berserk! Barking and jumping at the fence. It still makes Kyle jump.

KYLE

Fuck off! Fuck you!

Kyle scoops up his jumbled notebook and loose pages, shoves it all into his backpack, then spots something...

Glinting in the shrubbery, silver and shiny... a GUN!

Kyle glances back at the Dog, then picks up the silver pistol, a semi-automatic 45, turns it over. It's real.

Kyle looks up and down the alley. Nobody. He shoves the gun into his backpack, jumps back on his bike and tears off down the alley, leaving the Dog yapping angrily.

12

INT. KYLE'S HOUSE - DAY

12

Kyle enters by the back door. He makes his way through the kitchen and passes the living room.

On the couch, his MOTHER (overweight, late 30's) and neighbour DAN (same age, lean and greasy), looking dishevelled. Kyle has just interrupted some heavy petting.

MOTHER

Kyle, you're home. Where were you?

KYLE

(angrily)

What's he doing here?

MOTHER

This is Dan Hallstrom, our neighbour...

KYLE

I know who he is!

MOTHER

Now don't take that tone. He's only here to fix my, uh... thing.

DAN

(smiles lewdly)

That's right kid. I was fixing her thing.

KYLE

(angrily)

Why is your dog barking at me?

DAN

'Cause maybe you piss it off! Maybe it's your shitty attitude. My dog's smart. He can tell about people.

KYLE

I was minding my own business and it barks at me.

DAN

It's a guard dog kid. It's what it does, alright?

MOTHER

What's that on your face? Have you been in a fight?

KYLE

No.

MOTHER

What?

KYLE

No. I fell off my bike.

DAN

Pretty coordinated aren't ya?

Kyle turns and heads to his room, slams the door.

MOTHER

Hey, don't talk to my kid like that.

DAN

Relax, lemme fix your thing.

She smiles. He cackles, puts his hand up her shirt.

13 INT. KYLE'S ROOM - EVENING

13

Kyle takes the pistol from his backpack and examines it. Opens the chamber. There are bullets.

Kyle quietly contemplates -- dark thoughts. He turns it over in his hands, clicks the safety off then on, points it at a poster on his wall.

14 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

14

Kyle sits at the table across from Dan, both eating cereal while his mother busies herself. Kyle sneers at Dan who just smiles back and chuckles.

15 EXT. ALLEY - DAY

15

Kyle rides up to the chain link fence and stops.

Predictably, the Dog leaps at the fence, barking furiously.

Kyle just stares back coldly.

KYLE

What did I ever do to you? Why do you hate me? What is wrong with you? Fuck you, you idiot dog.

It's like the Dog is crazed. Barking and leaping.

Kyle removes his backpack, pulls out the gun...

KYLE (CONT'D)

Ok, the deal is you stop or I kill you.

A few backyards down, a CAR backs out of a garage.

Behind Kyle, a FLASH IN THE HOUSE WINDOW, barely seen over the top of the tall fence.

KYLE (CONT'D)

I'll be back, asshole dog.

Kyle shoves the gun back in the pack and pedals away.

16 EXT. STREET - DAY

16

Kyle approaches Bully and his Bullyboys -- waiting expectantly for him. He pulls up to a stop. No fear.

He gets off the bike and proffers it to Bully.

KYLE

Here ya go. Go ahead. See ya later.

Bully instantly notices the change in Kyle's attitude.

BULLY

See ya later? Maybe we want to walk to school with ya.

KYLE

Nah. You go on ahead.

BULLY

What, you don't wanna walk with me?

A beat. They stare each other down. It unnerves Bully.

BULLY (CONT'D)

Yeah, maybe you're right. You'd be too boring.

His pals laugh. Bully hops on Kyle's bike and they all take off.

Kyle looks on darkly. He's got a plan.

17 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY 17

Kyle at his desk. The Teacher hands out the graded assignments, gives Kyle his graded paper: D-

TEACHER

Mr. Callan. Worse grade in class. I'd prepare for a life of dumpster diving if I were you.

The Classroom laughs at the teacher's crack. Kyle is humiliated, looks at the teacher with extreme hate.

18 INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY / FACULTY ROOM - DAY 18

Kyle walks past the open door of the faculty room, sees the Teacher inside, sitting alone. Kyle looks up and down the hall. No one around. He reaches inside his backpack, heads toward the room...

TEACHER

(quietly)

Lock the door.

An attractive WOMAN teacher appears, goes to close the door -- locks eyes with Kyle a moment. Shuts the door.

Kyle turns... just as a group of students turn into the hall. Bully is one of them. Kyle and Bully exchange looks. Bully is still unnerved at Kyle's dark vibe.

19 EXT. STREET - DAY 19

Kyle pedals down the street. Up ahead, Bully and gang are walking and horsing around.

KYLE

(calls)

Hey! Hey! You want the bike?

Bully and Bullyboys turn as Kyle pulls up to a stop.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Here's my bike.

BULLY

I'm not interested in your shitty bike anymore. I'm not interested in you, either. Alright? You bore me, creep. So fuck off and we'll all be fine.

With that, he turns and the bullies all walk away, laughing.

BULLYBOY #1

Pathetic.

This is not what Kyle expected. It frustrates him even more.

20

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

20

Kyle cycles toward the chain link fence. The Dog starts barking before he's there. Kyle stops at the fence, gets off his bike.

KYLE

Alright you fuckin' dog. Deal's a deal.

Kyle pulls the gun from his pack and aims it at the Dog. The Dog continues barking and jumping at the fence, tether about to break...

Kyle aims carefully, releases the safety.

The Dog suddenly ratches up his intensity...

Behind Kyle, a SNAP!

LESTER (O.S.)

Hey kid! That's my...

Kyle whirls --

A mean looking man (LESTER, early 40's) has just come from the open gate in the yard behind him, and lunges straight toward Kyle.

Kyle shoots! Lester goes down. The Dog stops barking.

Kyle is horrified. What has he done? He starts to cry.

Lester moans.

21 INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT 21

Kyle's Mother sits in the waiting area, worried and impatient. Dan is with her, trying to calm her down.

22 INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM 22

Kyle, scared, almost in tears, sits at the table across from DET SGT. GREENAWAY, a kindly veteran of 50+.

GREENAWAY

Do you know that man?

KYLE

No. I seen him around once or twice. I didn't know he lived there.

GREENAWAY

His name is Lester Potter. You got him in the kidney. He'll be alright. He's the owner of the gun. We found a body, buried in his back yard. Seems a couple of nights ago, Lester and his pals got liquored up playing poker, started fooling around with the gun and it went off. Killed a guy named Charles Walker. No known relatives. Guess they reckoned no one would miss him. Anyway, Lester confessed. He said he must've dropped the gun in the alley during all the ruckus. He wanted you to know that dog's been barking at him ever since. Not at you. In fact, it was that dog clued us in to the body. It was just trying to tell you something. You follow?

Kyle nods.

23 EXT. PARK - DAY 23

Kyle in the park, throws a frisbee to the dog -- who leaps and catches it, brings it back to Kyle.

They continue, laughing and playing, now good friends.

THE END