THE REVENGE OF BILLY THE KID

By

Martin Cox
FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CHERYL KOWLES, 30’s, toned body, casually but stylishly coiffured, plunging sweater, capri slacks, snuggles into an easy chair, cell phone wedged between shoulder and chin.

CHERYL
I’m telling you. One minute he’s right behind me, the next, gone!

The front door slams. Cheryl grabs the phone, changes ears and sits up, pencil straight.

CHERYL
Hold on Bren. Sounds like Steve.

She covers the mouthpiece and calls out.

CHERYL
Steve? That you?

STEVE (O.S.)
Yeah, honey. Where’re you?

CHERYL
(to Steve)
Living room.
(into handset)
Yeah, it’s Steve. Gotta go babe. Call you later. Bye.

Detective STEVE KOWLES, early 40’s, tousled dirty-blond hair, straggling moustache, Sundance Kid lookalike, enters the warm glow of the living room as Cheryl hangs up.

She rises and greets Steve with a peck on the cheek.

CHERYL
Look a bit tired sweetie. Rough day?

STEVE
Could say that.

CHERYL
Drink?

Steve lowers himself onto the couch, savoring it’s caress.
STEVE
Sounds good...Who was that?

Cheryl moves swiftly to the drinks cabinet, deftly pouring two very large tumblers of scotch. She hands Steve his drink.

CHERYL
Oh, Bren....Cheers.

They clink glasses.

STEVE
You girls. Got no clue what you find to talk about.

Cheryl drops back into her chair.

CHERYL
Usual stuff. Girlie crap. Anyway, what about you? Your day...Wanna talk about it?

Steve takes a slug, swirling the alcohol round his mouth, considering his answer. Swallows.

STEVE
Got time?

CHERYL
Sure. Nothing on tonite.

Steve raises his eyebrows in surprise.

STEVE
Okay, but get ready for this’un. Its a real honey. Got me foxed.

Cheryl comfies herself. Ready and waiting.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - EARLIER THAT DAY

BILLY PROCTOR (23), angelic face, framed with wispy blond hair. Redneck, hulk-sized, checkered shirt, baggy jeans and new Nike sneakers, nervously shuffles up to the sergeant’s desk.

STEVE (V.O.)
A kid turns up this morning. Don Minsk’s on duty.
DON MINSK, late 40’s, stoic, crisp uniform, seen it all before through his piercing blue eyes, peers over the top of his glasses.

DON
Yes son, can I help you?

Billy hesitates, scratches his head, nervous.

BILLY
Er...yessir. I believe you can.
Y’see, I’ve done something bad...real bad.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve leans further back into the couch. Glancing down, he notices pizza, burgers, beer and genetics have launched an offensive on his waist band, almost imperceptible but there, advancing, patient.

He sneaks a look at Cheryl and adjusts his position, sucking it up.

CHERYL
So what was so "bad".

Steve raises his glass, indicating a refill. Cheryl downs her drink, responds, grabs his glass and heads for the alcohol oasis.

STEVE
Well, when Don went outside he found the Kid’s truck...complete with a body in back.

Cheryl spins.

CHERYL
Oh my God!

She makes her way back to the chair, passes Steve his glass.

CHERYL
Here hon. Um...how?

She sits, wide-eyed.
STEVE
Thanks.

He Swigs.

STEVE
Tells Don he’s strangled the guy. I mean this kid could snap your neck (snaps fingers) just like that. Friggin’ huge! Don calls me to interview him.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - EARLIER THAT DAY

Billy sits across a desk from Steve. Calm, hands palm down on top, a soda can placed precisely between. Anal-retentive.

STEVE (V.O.)
When I met Billy, that’s his name, Billy Proctor, I knew from the get-go this kid wasn’t dealing with a full deck. Had to be gentle.

Steve leans forward, interested not threatening.

STEVE
Okay Billy. The man in your truck---

Billy chimes in.

BILLY
Yeah. Killed him last night. Stopped him breathin’.

STEVE
Do you know him?

BILLY
Nope! Don’t. Don’t know the others neither.

Steve, shocked, draws his chair across to sit alongside Billy.

STEVE
Others?

BACK TO PRESENT
INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cheryl leans forward, eyes fixed on Steve, jaw dropped. She repeats Steve’s question.

CHERYL
Others?

STEVE
Oh yeah. Lotsa others. Man, I thought I’d heard it all.

Cheryl, impatiently.

CHERYL
Go on...How many?

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - EARLIER THAT DAY

Steve is now hunched with Billy. Whispering, encouraging, mentoring.

STEVE (V.O.)
Billy said he couldn’t remember....

BILLY
Can’t say how many. But I know my Mommy learned me a song.

Billy leans back, struggling to recall the words. He sings tunelessly.

BILLY
Ain’t it great. Ain’t it great...My little Billy’s just done eight.

Billy smiles, proud at his total recall. Grabs the soda. Chugs. Replaces it, slide-rule exact.

STEVE
Eight? So you killed eight?

BILLY

Steve recoils. Then regroups. Changes tack.
STEVE
You say your Mommy taught you this song?

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cheryl takes a huge slug. She rubs her forehead, perplexed, shocked.

CHERYL
What sort of Mother would---

Steve holds up a hand, cutting Cheryl off.

STEVE
Wait. It gets better...Billy goes and tells me that his Mommy not only taught him the song, but told him to kill all these guys.

Cheryl gasps, her hand goes to her mouth.

STEVE (CONT’D)
But here’s the real kicker.
(swig)
When we checked him out, found out he was an orphan. Never had a mother. In and out of foster homes all his life...A social screw-up!

CHERYL
Then who....?

STEVE
Ah...now that’s interesting. Y’see, Billy actually knows he never had a real mother.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - EARLIER THAT DAY

Steve paces, intolerant, barely hiding his frustration. He leans against the wall, fingers intertwined behind his head, listens, absorbs.

BILLY
Never had no Mom. No Pa neither for that matter. No one paid big ol’
Billy any mind. Got passed round...Not cute enough to love I s’pose...Ugly, stupid.

Billy pauses. Drops his head. Thinks. Looks up quickly, smiling, mis-aligned, discolored teeth unashamedly displayed.

Then along comes Mommy.

Steve pushes himself from the wall.

What’s mommy like?

Real pretty. Smells good. Proper ladylike.

Anything else?

Billy shakes his head slowly.

Nope. ’Part from makin’ me feel good.

And how’s she do that?

Billy swiftly launches his huge feet onto the table.

Sneakers. She buys me sneakers. Never had any new stuff. Waddya think? Cool?

Way cool, Billy. Way cool.

Steve gently removes Billy’s feet from the table.

When does she buy you new sneakers?

Billy fidgets.

When I stop those men.
STEVE
The men you killed?

Billy nods, face contorted, remembering.

STEVE
Stop 'em? Stop 'em doing what?

Billy clenches his fists, exhibiting barely controlled rage.
Steve retreats, slowly, uneasily. Billy slams his fists down on the table. Soda spews from the can.

BILLY
Stop them hurtin' Mommy!

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cheryl finishes her drink. Rises quickly.

CHERYL

STEVE
S’okay You and me both. Why donchya just bring the bottle. Save you gettin’ up and down.

Cheryl complies. Pours them both another super-sized scotch, drops lightly onto her chair. She gathers her legs, knees under her chin.

CHERYL
Who was hurting who?

Steve scratches his head.

STEVE
Okay, Billy told me that his Mommy would meet men. Singles bars, sleaze joints. Get the picture? They’d then drive to a motel... Billy’d follow in the truck.

CHERYL
And these men would hurt her?

FLASHBACK TO:
INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - EARLIER THAT DAY

Steve has paper towels, mopping up the soda flood.

BILLY
Sorry mister. Get like that sometimes. ’Specially when it comes to...

Billy’s voice trails off.

STEVE
Mommy?...Don’t worry son...Get any on yer sneakers?

Billy quickly examines his shoes, concerned.

BILLY
(relieved)
Nope. Phew! Lucky there, huh?

Steve throws the sodden towels into a garbage can. Sits next to Billy. Good cop.

STEVE
How’d the men hurt Mommy?

BILLY
She told me she wanted to be friends with them. I had to wait outside the room...but I could hear. I got good hearin’ and eyes too!

STEVE
Hear what?

Billy clutches himself.

BILLY
I’d hear those men hurt her. She would be screamin’ and groanin’... S’all I could do to stop myself runnin’ in....

STEVE
So why didn’t you.

BILLY
I had to wait for Mommy’s signal. When she opened the curtain, that’s when I run in.
STEVE
And strangled them?

Billy nods, face contorted again.

STEVE
Then what?

BILLY
I’d wrap ’em up in a rug. Then follow Mommy to the woods, sometimes the hills. Dump ’em.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cheryl is engrossed.

CHERYL
No problem then. Billy takes you where they dumped the bodies and you go from there, right?

STEVE
Yeah, I wish. Billy has a real problem remembering certain things. Actually, most things. He doesn’t know how many, where they are....nothing. Every way I turn, I hit a brick wall.

Cheryl leans forward, placing a well manicured hand on Steve’s knee.

STEVE
Think he’s doing this on purpose? Y’know, playing dumb.

Steve pats her hand.

STEVE
No. He’s the real deal. A one-off.

Cheryl removes her hand, leans back, eyebrows knitted, brow furrowed.

CHERYL
O.K. Why’d he bring the body in this morning? He should’ve dumped it right?
STEVE
Asked him the self-same question.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - EARLIER THAT DAY

Steve runs his fingers through his hair, tugs on his moustache, seeks inspiration, divine intervention.

Billy is folded over the table, chin rests on gargantuan hands, eyes stare straight ahead.

BILLY
Last night, I broke the rules.

STEVE
How?

BILLY
Not meant to see. Just stand outside, listen. Wait. Watch for the curtain sign.

STEVE
But?

BILLY
But the curtain was a bit open an’ I looked in. Just a peek.

STEVE
You saw something, right?

Billy nods slowly.

BILLY
Saw Mommy, kissing that man. Laughing, havin’ fun. S’pose the same with the others...She lied. She lied to Billy.

Billy starts to cry. Steve places a comforting arm around his huge shoulders.

STEVE
Is that why you brought the latest one in to us?

Billy nods, cuffing snot.
STEVE
But, you still went ahead and killed the man.

BILLY
Uh huh.

STEVE
Why?

BILLY

STEVE
But, why stop now? You could get some more, next time.

BILLY
Got enough now. Don’t want no more...’Sides, got God awful dreams. Can’t sleep. Gotta stop.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve looks drained, pale, older. Cheryl, now clutching a cushion looks sympathetic.

CHERYL
Poor kid. He needs help.

STEVE
Got the psycho’s in already. They’re gonna need a few days.

CHERYL
Could he have just killed the one? Y’know made up the rest? Kinda delusional? Wants attention?

Steve shrugs.

STEVE
Dunno. Not my job to say...Just need one measly break. A crumb. Godsakes, something!

Steve downs his drink and pours himself another. He offers a refill to Cheryl who waves it away.
CHERYL
Well, my concern right now is my man. Why don’t you take your drink, run yourself a hot bath and have a nice long soak? Just relax. I’ll come and soap your back when I’ve cleaned up here. O.K?

STEVE
Yeah. You’re right. Billy’ll still be there tomorrow.

Steve rises wearily and turns to leave.

CHERYL
Don’t forget your drink darling.

She hands Steve his glass.

CHERYL
I’ll bring the bottle.

Steve, wobbling slightly, waves a hand in acknowledgement as he leaves. Cheryl watches, waits, then snatches up her cell phone. Furtive. Punches in a number.

CHERYL
(whispering)
Hey Bren. It’s me. Remember I told you how Billy went rogue on me last night?....Shit girl, you won’t believe this. Steve’s got him in custody....No I’m not friggin’ kidding....Yeah, this morning. Saw me and this guy through the window. Totally freaked....No, they’ve got nothing. Billy’s so dumb. Barely remembers his name. Steve’s pulling his hair out, poor baby....Hold on Bren.

Cheryl lowers the handset as a cell phone rings in the near distance. She resumes.

CHERYL
S’okay. Steve’s phone. Anyway, shame really. Billy was coming on well....Now I gotta get a new one. And fast! You know I can’t go without, well you know....

She pauses, takes a breath.
Look, you and Vikki share one.
Julio right?...Oh yeah, Juan.
CHERYL
Sorry. I was wondering if I could
hook up with him until I recruit?
You’re the only one I can ask. All
the other girls in the club are so
friggin’ possessive it’s not
funny...Oh Bren, you’re a
life-saver. Thanks so much. Knew I
could rely on you...See you at yoga
tomorrow? We’ll chat then, okay?

As Cheryl hangs up Steve re-enters, shirtless, drink raised
in celebration.

STEVE
Got it!

CHERYL
Got what hon?

STEVE
Our break. We got our break!

Cheryl shifts nervously.

CHERYL
Wow. Congratulations. So, what
happened?

STEVE
Just got a call. The guys checked
out Billy’s trailer, and there they
were. All lined up, neat as you
like.

CHERYL
What were.

STEVE
The sneakers. Pairs of the friggin’
things.

CHERYL
Okay, but how’s that a break?

STEVE
Billy kept ’em all in their boxes.
Bar codes an’ all. Tomorrow we’ll
find out who bought what, where.
Man, I am so friggin’ pumped.

Steve downs his scotch, turns and leaves. Cheryl calls after
him, concerned.
CHERYL
What if she paid cash?

STEVE (O.S.)
The miracles of C.C.T.V. darlin'.
Just match up the dates and times
and, bingo! In the tub now. Don’t
forget the bottle.

Cheryl hastily hits redial.

CHERYL
Bren. Yeah, sorry girl. Don’t think
I’ll be at yoga tomorrow.

FADE OUT:

THE END