

The Small Neighborhood in the Middle of Nowhere

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"Billy lets go, he isn't worth it."

"The hell he ain't Hank. A kid can't walk home from school without being scared, that's not right. I'm gunna teach him a lesson."

"You should listen to your brother Billy, no sense in me kicking your ass again."

"Jeremy that was three years ago, I've gotten a lot bigger since then. Besides, what you're doin' ain't right. It ain't right at all. So square up you pussy, lets go."

Billy put his fists up like he saw Rocky do in the movies. The spectating kids formed a circle around them. Sidestepping like two gladiators locked in battle to the death, one of them would not come out of here the same. Jeremy struck first.

Billy lost his breath from the blow to his stomach and backed up. Within seconds he recovered surprising Jeremy's smirking face with hammering blows. Jeremy put his hands up but Billy didn't care.

He would pound on his forearms until they were black and blue, break them if it came to it. Jeremy stumbled from the high intensity onslaught of Billy's fists, which apparently were made of brick. The stumble caused Jeremy's arm to drop slightly creating a small exposure to the face. Billy's right hook had no trouble seeking out the weakness in the defense. Jeremy's cheekbone made a loud popping noise as Billy's knuckles dragged across his face. The nose was next in line and in that one swift motion, Billy broke it. Jeremy reached up to hold his crooked nose and fell to his knees. Blood oozed from between his fingers dripping into dusty dark red puddles on the dirt.

"Now, you might be the popular guy, your father might be the mayor, but you have no right picking on little kids like you done. Like you did my little brother, like you did to me. Because you know what Jeremy? We grow up and we don't forget. You better start learning that you are a small fish in a big pond and there is always a shark waiting to eat your ass," Billy stood over the hunched figure.

Jeremy looked up, and in the shadow of Billy nodded his head. Billy grabbed his little brother by the arm.

"Let's go Hank, he aint gunna bother anyone no more and Mom will have supper ready by now."

The crowd stood in silence and parted to let the two boys out. They set off for home into the orange hue of the sunset. After about a hundred yards, Billy turned to look back, the crowd was gone but Jeremy remained on his knees staring at their long shadows on the horizon. Billy was certain things would be quiet for a while, but Jeremy wouldn't be completely shut down that easy. Retaliation was coming, just a matter of time and place.

Billy knew that people like Jeremy came to power through fear. While he had the false respect of many, some frustrated soul will always rise up and challenge his authority. Ultimately the only way to end Jeremy's reign is to destroy him, but Billy doesn't have it in his heart to do that. So Jeremy will rise again, only stronger next time, until another Billy takes the challenge. Thus perpetuating the state of fear among the children, in the small neighborhood, in the middle of nowhere.