

MILKMAN. You could do with some transport. Do you fancy a lift? A milk float's better than walking, you know.

BILLY. Ah, only just, though. They only go about five miles an hour, them things.

MILKMAN. It's still better than walking, in't it?

BILLY. I could go faster on a kid's scooter.

MILKMAN. You know what I always say?

BILLY. What?

MILKMAN. Third class riding's better than first class walking any day.

BILLY. I'm not so sure on one of them ramshacks.

MILKMAN. Please yourself. See yer.

BILLY. See yer, mister.

*The MILKMAN delivers milk and exits, whistling. BILLY drinks the orange juice. We hear the sound of the milk cart moving away.*

*The pit hooter sounds. BILLY runs home to . . .*

*MRS CASPER is getting dressed and making-up in the kitchen mirror. BILLY puts orange on table and throws his newspaper bag under the table, transferring the carton of eggs to his jacket. He has seen a man leaving the front door as he entered the back.*

MRS CASPER. Is that you, Reg? Oh, it's you, Billy. Haven't you gone to school yet?

BILLY (*looking off*). Who's that bloke?

MRS CASPER. That's Reg. You know Reg, don't you?

BILLY. Is that him you came home with last night? Reg?

MRS CASPER. Oh, shut up, Billy. I've not much time. I'm gonna be late for work again. There's some tea mashed if you want a cup. I don't know if the milk's come or not.

BILLY. Was it?

MRS CASPER. Oh, stop pestering me. I've not much time. I've got to get to work. You got a fag?

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BILLY. No. Was it?

MRS CASPER. Do me a favour love, and run up to t' shop for some fags.

BILLY. Old Porter won't give you owt, he says.

MRS CASPER. Go along to Hardy's then love. He gives us tick.

BILLY. That's miles and he'll not be open yet.

MRS CASPER. You can go to the back door, Mr Hardy'll not mind.

BILLY (*putting on his school tie*). I can't, I'll be late.

MRS CASPER. Go on love. And bring a few things back with you, a loaf, some butter, a few eggs, summat like that. We can have some breakfast then.

BILLY. Go yourself.

MRS CASPER. I've not much time. I need a fag. Tell him to put it int' book and I'll pay him at weekend.

BILLY. He says you can't have owt else 'til you've paid up.

MRS CASPER. He always says that. Ignore him. Tell him I'll come and see him tonight after work. Tell him that. I'll give you summat if you go. And there's a bet of our Jud's to take to t' bookies. Don't forget that.

BILLY. I'm not taking it.

MRS CASPER. You'd better had, lad.

BILLY. I'm fed up of taking bets every day. Why can't he take 'em?

MRS CASPER. How can he, you dozy bugger, when he's down pit all that time? He don't finish 'til races is over.

BILLY. I don't care, I'm not taking it. I'll be late.

*BILLY makes for the door, but MRS CASPER blocks his way.*

MRS CASPER. Billy, get up to them shops and do as you're told.

BILLY. Go yourself.

MRS CASPER *swipes at him, and misses. BILLY moves behind the table.*

MRS CASPER. You cheeky young bugger.

BILLY. Give over now, mum, I'll be late for school.

MRS CASPER. You'll be more than late, unless you do as you're told.

BILLY. Gryce said I'd get stick next time I'm late.

MRS CASPER. That's nowt to what you'll get if I catch you. And I'll catch you, my lad. Don't you believe it.

BILLY *pretends to go one way, MRS CASPER grabs at him as he goes the other way and out of the door into the garden, over the fence and into the fields.*

Just you wait 'til tonight. And you'd better place that bet. Jud'll kill you if you forget. Just you wait, you'll see.

BILLY *takes out the carton of eggs and throws them at the side of the house one by one.*

And don't think I've forgotten lad 'cos I haven't. Just you wait, lad, 'til I get home tonight.

BILLY *gives her the V sign and runs to . . .*

## Scene 2

### School Assembly, 9.00 am

*The school bell rings. MR CROSSLEY is marking his class register as everyone groups for assembly in the school hall. There is a raised area with a lectern and microphone. Extend the register as required until the stage is filled with PUPILS.*

MR CROSSLEY. Abbott.

PUPIL. Sir.

MR CROSSLEY. Anderson.

PUPIL. Sir.

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**Scene 17****The Field, 7.00 pm**

BILLY *is working the lure in the field, a handkerchief tied to the end of it. Calling to Kes all the time. He shortens the chord and swings it round so fast that it unravels. Then he lets it go and shoots it up in the air. He runs to it as it falls to the ground. This happens several times.*

BILLY. Kes! Kes! Come on then Kes!

    Come on Kes! Come on then!

    Kes! Kes! Kes!

    Kes! Kes! Kes!

    Kes! Kes! Kes!

BILLY *runs to . . .*

**Scene 18****Billy's House, 8.00 pm**

BILLY *bursts in through the kitchen and into the living room. The radio is playing. JUD is drinking tea. MRS CASPER is sitting at the table reading a magazine.*

BILLY. Where is it? What have you done with it?

MRS CASPER. Where've you been till now? Shut that door, Billy, there's a terrible draught behind you. Get some tea.

BILLY. I said where is it?

    JUD *continues to read the comic, dipping biscuits into his tea, then suddenly:*

JUD (*shouts*). What're you staring at?

MRS CASPER. What's going off, what's all t' bloody shouting about?

BILLY. Ask him, he knows what it's all about.

JUD. Yes lad, and you'd have known if I'd got hold of you earlier.

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MRS CASPER. Know what, what are you both talking about?

BILLY *is very distressed.*

Now what's the matter with you?

BILLY *can only point to* JUD.

What you done to him now, Jud?

JUD. It's his fault, if he'd put that bet on like he was told there'd have been none of this.

MRS CASPER. Didn't he? I told him before I went to work this morning.

JUD. Did he bloody hell.

MRS CASPER. I told you not to forget, Billy.

JUD. He didn't forget, he spent t' money.

MRS CASPER. And what happened, did they win?

JUD. Win! I'd have had a fair whack to draw if he'd kept his thieving hands to himself!

MRS CASPER. Oh, Billy, you've done it once too often this time.

JUD. They both won you know. A hundred to eight and four to one, they came in. I knew it an' all! 'Tell-Him-He's-Dead', was a cert, and I've been following that 'Crackpot' all season. It was forced to win sometime. I could have had a week off work with that money.

MRS CASPER. Well, what's he crying about then?

BILLY. Because he's killed me hawk instead, that's why.

MRS CASPER. You never have, have you, Jud?

BILLY. He has, I know he has, just because he couldn't catch me.

MRS CASPER. Have you, Jud?

JUD. All right then, so I've killed it. What are you going to do about it?

BILLY *screams an agonising cry and collapses onto the floor or sofa. He then rushes round to* MRS CASPER. *He*

*tries to bury his face against her. She holds him off, embarrassed and pushes him to the floor.*

MRS CASPER. Give over then, Billy. Don't be so daft.

JUD. It was its own stupid fault! I was only going to let it go, but it wouldn't get out of its hut. And every time I tried to shift it, it kept lashing out at my hands with its claws. Look at them, they're scratched to ribbons!

BILLY. You bastard! You big rotten bastard.

JUD. Don't call me a bastard, else you'll be next to get it.

BILLY. You bastard! You fucking bastard!

MRS CASPER. Shut up, Billy, I'm not having that kind of language in here.

BILLY. Well do summat then! Do summat to him!

MRS CASPER. Where is it Jud? What have you done with it?

JUD. It's in the bin. Where it belongs.

*BILLY runs out to the dustbin, feels inside and finds the dead hawk. BILLY returns to the living room, possibly with the dead bird. If it remains in the dustbin BILLY tries to get MRS CASPER to the bin, if there is a bird, BILLY waves it around the room.*

BILLY. Have you seen what he's done, Mum?

MRS CASPER. It's a shame love, but it can't be helped.

BILLY. Come and look at it though. Look what he's done.

MRS CASPER. It was a rotten trick, Jud.

JUD. It was a rotten trick what he did, wan't it?

MRS CASPER. I know but you know how much he thought about that bird.

BILLY. It's not fair on him, Mum. It's not fair.

MRS CASPER. I know, but it's done now, so there's nowt we can do about it, is there?

BILLY. What about him though, what are you doin' to him?

MRS CASPER. What can I do?

BILLY. Hit him! Gi' him a good hiding! Gi' him some fist!

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