

SANDCASTLES

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. THE BEACH, AFTERNOON.

BILLY COLMER (8) dumps out a pile of sand from a bucket, the beginning steps of a sandcastle. He wears a pink pair of swim trunks and has a large glob of sunblock on his nose. His plastic sand toys are laid out perfectly in a row.

His mother, DIANA (31), is lounging in an oversized sun hat, reading a magazine.

With a look of laser-focused concentration, Billy painstakingly carves out his castle. SWEEPING ORCHESTRAL MUSIC plays as a montage of Billy meticulously crafting his castle plays. He then digs a moat around the castle, and begins running back and forth between the ocean and the castle with a bucket to fill the moat.

As Billy runs, he stops in his tracks when he sees HECTOR ROBINSON (8), making his own poorly constructed sandcastle. We can tell from his spiky mohawk and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles swim trunks that he is a troublemaker.

After a moment, Billy nervously returns to filling up his moat, eventually forgetting about Hector.

Billy's running catches Hector's attention, and Hector watches him with a mischievous grin.

As the MUSIC SWELLS, in slow motion, Billy puts the final touch on his castle: he places a stick and leaf into the top, symbolizing a flag. We cut back and forth between Billy's hand lowering to place the flag and Hector running towards him.

Just as Billy takes a step back to admire his work, Hector leaps in from behind him, demolishing the sand castle.

The MUSIC takes a dramatic turn. Billy's face changes from pride to absolute horror as he watches his beloved castle get slain. He falls to his knees and puts his hands on his head, pulling at his own hair.

BILLY

NOOOO!

Billy picks up a handful of sand and watches it run through his fingers. He acts like it is the corpse of a loved one.

BILLY (CONT'D)

How could you do this?

HECTOR

Haha! Loser!

BILLY

M-my castle! My life's work! The culmination of my craftsmanship! Gone!

HECTOR

Hey, nice pink shorts! What are you, g a y?

BILLY

It's a gender neutral color!

Hector kicks sand in Billy's face and runs away. Billy covers his face with his hands and bends over, crying.

Diana finally looks up from her magazine and sees Billy crying. She sees the destroyed castle, just a soggy lump now, and hurries over. She crouches down and rubs his back.

DIANA

Honey, what happened? Who did this?

Billy doesn't look up. Diana surveys the beach, and after seeing Hector, she connects the dots.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Aw, baby, don't be so upset. It's just a sandcastle. You can't let bullies get you down.

Billy continues sobbing into his hands.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Hey, how about we start over and make an even bigger, better sandcastle? Bigger than any sandcastle anyone's ever seen!

Billy looks up from his hands with a hauntingly angry and determined face. The sunscreen on his nose is now caked in sand, and his eyes are bloodshot from tears. His wet cheeks also have sand stuck to them. He stares at Hector, who has already returned to working on his own sandcastle.

BILLY

No, mother. No reconstruction could possibly bring back the feelings of pride and accomplishment that that castle brought me. I crafted her for hours with my own two hands.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

She was my pride and joy. And now she's gone forever.

DIANA

Well, how about we just go home, huh? We can make some popcorn and watch Scooby Doo. The one in the museum with the suit of armor? That one's your favorite, right?

BILLY

Hector Robinson has been the bane of my existence for years.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLAYGROUND AT RECESS TIME, THREE MONTHS AGO.

Billy is slowly but surely making his way across the monkey bars. Suddenly, just as he reaches for the next wrung, Hector barrels through him, knocking him down.

BILLY

(voice over)

When he knocked me off of the monkey bars, I did nothing.

Billy lands face-first on the tanbark, coughing up a mouthful of wood chips. He turns his head around, wood chips stuck to his face. He looks up to see Hector reach the final monkey bar, point his finger and laugh at Billy, then kick more tanbark in his face as he runs away.

CUT TO:

INT. LUNCHROOM, LUNCH TIME, FIVE MONTHS AGO.

Billy is sitting at a table, opening up his Scooby Doo lunch box. He pulls out a juice box, and after a few misses, he stabs the straw through the hole.

BILLY

(voice over)

When he drenched me in juice, I still did nothing.

As Billy angles the straw towards himself, Hector runs up to him and squeezes the juice box as hard as he can. Juice shoots out at Billy's face, drenching him.

HECTOR

Haha! How's the juice, loser?

Billy sits there, mouth agape, too shocked to even move.

CUT BACK TO:

THE BEACH

Dark storm clouds start to roll in on the beach.

BILLY

But now, he's gone too far. He destroyed my masterpiece. My Mona Lisa. That sandcastle was going to be the crowning achievement of my life. The pinnacle of architectural prowess. He will pay for this.

DIANA

Hey, he made a sandcastle, too. You wanna go knock it down? You won't get in trouble.

Billy shakes his head no.

BILLY

No, mother. This revenge requires patience. Hector Robinson deserves a far greater punishment than mere payback. I will strike when he least expects it, and I will get him where it'll hurt most.

DIANA

Oh, uh... okay, hun.

Billy tilts his chin downwards, and his face becomes shadowy and threatening.

FADE TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD, THIRTY YEARS LATER, MORNING.

Billy's expression is identical to the previous shot, except now, he is older and grizzled with patchy stubble.

The CAMERA ZOOMS OUT to reveal that Billy is hanging off the side of a garbage truck, wearing a dirty uniform.

Billy hops off the truck and starts to load garbage cans into the crane.

Two children, CELIA (7) and NICK (7) are playing on the front lawn outside the house. The front door opens, and HECTOR (now 38) appears in the doorway wearing a sharp suit and carrying a briefcase.

The second he lays eyes on Hector, Billy freezes. His jaw drops and his eyes widen.

CELIA
Bye, Daddy!

NICK
Have fun at work!

Celia and Nick run over to Hector and try to hug him. He bats them away.

HECTOR
Easy, easy! Wrinkle the suit, and
no beach tomorrow.

CELIA
Sorry, Daddy.

Hector gets in his sports car and drives away.

Billy is still frozen as he watches Hector drive away.

CUT TO:

INT. BILLY'S HOUSE, NIGHT.

Billy storms into his small, run-down home and slams the door. DIANA (now 61) fell asleep on the couch with the television on. Billy tiptoes by to avoid waking her up. Once he reaches a back room, he quickly enters, locks the door, and flips on the light.

The walls are covered in pictures of Hector: yearbook pages, graduation programs, newspaper headings, zoomed-in pictures taken from a distance. It becomes abundantly clear that Billy had obsessed over this man his entire life. A red string connects different moments of Hector's life together, and ends with three question marks. Billy removes the question marks and writes down Hector's address. Over the wall of pictures, in red, Billy has written: VENGEANCE WILL BE MINE.

Billy opens a drawer to reveal a pistol and two bullets. There is a sticky note on the gun that says "FOR VENGEANCE ONLY". He loads the bullets into the chamber and giddily strokes the gun. His eyes glaze over the walls. Focus in on a photo of Hector with Celia and Nick.

BILLY
Vengeance *will* be mine. At last.

CUT TO:

EXT. HECTOR'S HOUSE, THE NEXT MORNING.

Celia and Nick eagerly run out to the car wearing swimsuits. Hector saunters out, looking much less excited than them. The kids eagerly jump around outside the car door.

HECTOR
Easy, easy. Don't scratch the car,
I just got it painted. Janice! I
forgot my tanning oil! Grab it,
will ya?

JANICE (30), Hector's wife, appears in the doorway moments later. The Robinsons get into the car and drive off. From a hedge across the street, Billy jumps out. He gets in his beat-up car and follows them.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SAME BEACH, THIRTY YEARS LATER, AFTERNOON.

Celia and Nick are by the shore, building a sandcastle. Hector and Janice lounge in beach chairs, sunbathing.

From the top of the steps leading down to the beach, Billy appears. He cocks his gun and puts it in his pocket.

Billy approaches Hector, casting a shadow over him.

HECTOR
Hey, pal, do ya mind? I'm trying to
catch a tan over here.

BILLY
Don't you remember me?

HECTOR
Sorry, can't say that I do.

BILLY
Billy.

Hector blankly stares at Billy.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Billy Colmer.

HECTOR
Sorry, not ringing a bell.

BILLY
We went to school together.
Roseville Elementary.

HECTOR
(clearly doesn't remember)
Right, right! Roseville Elementary!
Nice to see you again, pal! Now
could ya move please?

BILLY
Oh, no. I'm not going anywhere.
It's time for you to pay for your
sins, Hector Robinson.

Billy slowly pulls out his gun. JANICE SCREAMS.

HECTOR
Hey, hey, woah! What do you want
from me? Is it money? I can get you
money. A whole lot of it.

BILLY
I don't want your money. I want you
to pay for what you did to me.

HECTOR
What? What did I do to you?

Billy looks over to Celia and Nick. Celia places the "flag",
a stick poked through a leaf, into the castle.

BILLY
Perfect.

He walks up to the castle, and stops about five feet away. He
aims his gun towards them. Hector chases after him.

HECTOR
Hey! HEY! GET AWAY FROM THEM!

Billy turns to Hector, a look of insanity on his face.

BILLY

I told myself thirty years ago that vengeance would be mine.

HECTOR

Buddy, what are you talking about?
I've never seen you before in my life!

BILLY

You destroyed my creation. The best thing I had ever made.

HECTOR

Huh?

BILLY

My sandcastle.

HECTOR

You're pointing a gun at my kids over a fucking sandcastle?

BILLY

It wasn't just a sandcastle.
It was the most important thing in my life. And you took it away. Now, I'm returning the favor.

Billy aims his gun at the two kids and prepares to shoot.

HECTOR

No, please!

Billy's finger pulls the trigger. Hector covers his eyes. WE HEAR TWO GUNSHOTS. Hector uncovers his eyes, and we see that Celia and Nick are fine (terrified, but fine). The camera focuses on the sandcastle, and we see two bullet holes in it.

Billy repeatedly jumps on the castle. He stomps it until it is flat. The Robinsons watch him in a stunned, confused silence. All that can be heard is Billy's laughter.

BILLY

I did it. I finally did it. Thirty years later, and... I got my revenge! VENGEANCE IS MINE!

HECTOR

Get the FUCK away from my kids!

BILLY

No problem. Enjoy the rest of your
life, Hector. It'll never be the
same.

Billy holds up two proud middle fingers, and walks backwards
holding them up until he's out of sight.

Hector puts one hand on his hip and uses the other to block
the sun from his eyes.

NICK

Daddy, what was that about?

CELIA

Yeah, who was that?

HECTOR

I have no idea.

FADE TO BLACK.