

A VOCAL MINORITY

Draft 6

Written by

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EXT. SUBWAY STATION - AFTERNOON

BILLY (22), wearing a jacket zipped all the way up, is surrounded by football fans in blue. A group pass singing Derry's Walls.

RANGERS FANS

The cry is no surrender, surrender
or you'll die (DIE DIE)!

Billy turns to camera and talks as if narrating a documentary.

BILLY

The primal cry of the indigenous Rangers fan, one of Glasgow's oldest tribes. Born blue and with an instinctive hatred of their rivals Celtic, these ancient factions have been locked in conflict for over a 100 years. Separated by religion, brought together by battle. Or football as some like to call it...

Another group pass singing THE BILLY BOYS, waving Union Jack flags and the flag of Ulster.

RANGERS FANS

Hullo! Hullo! We are the Billy Boys! Hullo! Hullo! You'll know us by our noise!

BILLY

A catchy wee ditty originally sang in celebration of a protestant street gang but now more commonly associated with King William of Orange who came over from Holland in 1688 to curb the catholic uprising. The mention of being up to one's knees in fenian blood has long been controversial. Unsurprisingly, King William's marriage to his 15 year old cousin is somewhat less celebrated... Of course the rival tribe are never far from controversy themselves...

Above the street a few Celtic fans hang out of a tenement window wearing green strips and waving an Irish flag. They sing.

CELTIC FANS

Oo-ah, up the 'RA, say oo-ah up the 'RA!

BILLY

Where's the average fan of today might be expected to sing about their favourite striker of the present, a certain element of the Celtic support are curiously inclined to sing about their favourite IRA hunger strikers of the past. Cup final day in Glasgow and seemingly more interest in the politics of a divided Ireland than in the football of a united Scotland.

Billy smiles and drops the doc approach.

BILLY

Of course we're not all mental, most of us just want to watch the football...

He smiles and zips his jacket down a little to show us a flash of his blue strip before zipping it back up.

BILLY

In Glasgow it's sometimes best to keep your allegiances to yourself. A vocal minority of troublemakers, that's what they call them. I'm not saying I didn't sing the songs myself back in the day because I did. My old man taught them to me just like his own taught him.

A shot of BILLY'S DAD in an armchair singing The Billy Boys.

BILLY'S DAD

Hullo! Hullo! We are the Billy Boys!

Back to Billy on the street.

BILLY

Side by side, father and son. We've shed more tears on the terraces than anywhere else. I mean, we're Scottish, we're not supposed to show emotion.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

I live in London these days but I still make it up for as many games with the old man as I can. It was that distance that helped me to see just how mental this city really is when it comes to football. Well, distance and a guy called Johnny from Belfast. We met in a London boozer but all we wanted to talk about was football in Glasgow. The Land that Time Forgot, that's what he calls it...

The Celtic fans hanging out the window are now dressed like caveman. One of them shouts...

CELTIC FAN

Dirty huns!

Freeze frame. Caption reads: HUN - DEROGATORY TERM FOR A FAN OF RANGERS FOOTBALL CLUB.

The Rangers fans below, now also dressed as cavemen shout back.

RANGERS FAN

Fenian scum!

Freeze frame. Caption reads: FENIAN - FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS DEDICATED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT IRELAND

BILLY (SMILES)

I mean he's got a point...

As we see the fans continuing to hurl abuse at each other they're back in their normal clothes.

BILLY

Johnny's taken me over the water a few times. It's a different story there. The Troubles aren't forgotten, the history isn't ignored. But the thing is, most of them are moving on. So when I told the old man last week that I'd met someone and he just so happened to be a Celtic supporting catholic from Belfast well, let's just say that was a harder closet to come out of than the last one. Honestly, it was like the 5 stages of grief. Stage 1...

INT. BILLY'S FATHER'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - BEFORE
BILLY'S DAD, biscuit poised over a cup of tea, stares in disbelief. When he talks it's still Billy's voice we hear.

BILLY'S DAD (IN BILLY'S VOICE)
No he's no'...

Caption reads - STAGE 1 - DENIAL

EXT. SUBWAY STATION - NOW

BILLY
Aye he is. Stage 2...

INT. BILLY'S FATHER'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - BEFORE

Billy's dad obliterates the biscuit in his hand. Caption reads - STAGE 2 - ANGER

EXT. SUBWAY STATION - NOW

BILLY (SMILES)
Next one's my favourite. Stage 3...

INT. BILLY'S FATHER'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - BEFORE

Billy's dad shakes his head with a look of desperation

BILLY'S DAD (IN BILLY'S VOICE)
Maybe it's just a phase?

Caption reads - STAGE 3 - BARGAINING

EXT. SUBWAY STATION - NOW

BILLY
Only he could call 23 years of
Catholicism a phase. Stage 4...

INT. BILLY'S FATHER'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - BEFORE

Billy's dad looks crestfallen.

BILLY'S DAD (IN BILLY'S VOICE)
Side by side. Father and son...

Caption reads - STAGE 4 - DEPRESSION

EXT. SUBWAY STATION - NOW

BILLY
Exactly, I told him. That's the
important thing right there.
(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

Not all that shite about fenian blood and no surrender. We didn't care about all that sectarian pish when we stopped Celtic winning the league at Ibrox in 2012. Or when we scored that penalty against Fiorentina in 2008 that sent us to the UEFA Cup Final.

A shot of Billy and his dad in the living room embracing each other in joyous celebration, tears in both their eyes.

BILLY

None of that came from hate or religious division. It came from love. For football. For Rangers. For each other. Glasgow's got its problems when it comes to football. There's no doubt about that. But there's more passion in this city for the beautiful game than anywhere else in the world. I mean where else would a man find it harder to tell his old man what team his boyfriend supports than the fact he's got a bloody boyfriend in the first place?! Passion's not the problem. We just have to point it towards the future instead of the past. Maybe then we could all pin our colours to our chests without worrying about that vocal minority spoiling it for the rest of us. There's one last stage in the cycle of grief. If we could reach that then maybe things might start to be different...

Billy looks nervously around and checks his watch. He sighs.

BILLY

Told him I'd be here today with 3 tickets. 2 for the Rangers end, 1 for the Celtic end. Said maybe we could all meet for a pint after the match...

He hesitates then pulls out his phone. He brings up his contacts and hovers his finger over the call button beside his dad's number. A young man approaches. It's JOHNNY. He too has his jacket zipped up. He gives Billy a look that Billy returns with a shake of his head before he shoves his phone back into his pocket. Johnny gives his shoulder a squeeze.

BILLY

Come on, I'm not missing kick off
for that old-

Johnny motions across the street. Billy looks up to see his dad standing there. He hesitates then steps forward, stopping when he reaches them. He gives Johnny an awkward nod who gives him an awkward nod back. They turn and walk off together, Billy's dad in the middle, Billy and Johnny flanking him on either side. Billy and Johnny glance at each other. Billy nods and in synchronicity they unzip their jackets, revealing Billy's blue strip underneath and Johnny's green.

As they pass a pub draped in Union Jacks a trio of Rangers fans spill out, immediately noticing the green of Johnny's strip fast approaching. They glance at each other in disbelief then turn back.

RANGERS FANS

What the fuck?/You lost mate?

But Billy, his dad and Johnny don't even hesitate, instead walking straight towards them, the fans stepping aside as they pass. When they emerge on the other side Billy smiles.

BILLY

Stage 5...

As the fans continue to berate them Billy's dad give them the V's over his shoulders. Freeze frame. Caption reads: STEP 5 - ACCEPTANCE.

FADE OUT.