

Tree of Life

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Third Draft

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1. EXT. RIVER WALK. DAY

Ned oversees Billy with his friends.

BILLY

Oi lads, watch this.

Billy grips the trash ball in his hands. He gestures as if to garner more hype for his shot. Unfortunately for him, he misses his shot and it bounces onto the concrete below.

BILLY'S FRIEND 1

God you're awful.

BILLY'S FRIEND 2

Yeah, man is the trash haha.

Billy's friends tease him as they exit the area.

Ned, looking at the waste on the ground, decides to pick it up and throw the litter into the bin.

2. INT. EMPTY WSU CLASSROOM. DAY

Ned walks into Environmental Science class, sits on his seat and takes out his laptop in preparation.

TEACHER

Good morning class, here are your marks from your previous assignment. Read through them and reflect using the provided feedback.

The teacher hands Ned his grade on their environmental sustainability report.

TEACHER

Some people in this class have received excellent scores.

Ned sits down, see that he got an A+ and smiles.

The teacher goes to deliver Billy's report, who is not paying attention, with a non-serious attempt at covering his gaming.

TEACHER

And some with, let's say, less favourable marks.

Billy looks at his report, and is saddened for a split second before dismissing it and continuing on his playthrough.

Teacher:

Okay class, now for the next assignment.

Billy groans whilst Ned listens intently.

From Billy's perspective the class turns blurry as he dozes off to sleep.

He wakes up to the sound of the bell ringing.

TEACHER

Okay thank you for your time class, remember to do your assignments I will see you next time. Except for you Billy, you stay here.

BILLY

I wasn't sleeping miss, you were saying something about an eco-friendly project or something.

TEACHER

That's not what I came to talk to you about. Come outside with me, what is this?

The teacher brings him outside and shows to him a garbage bin with litter all around it.

BILLY

That wasn't me miss, I swear.

TEACHER

Hmm, let's check the footage then.

BILLY

Alright alright fine, I admit it was me.

TEACHER

Disappointing, not only do you not participate in class, you completely disregarded the message I'm trying to promote. Any more of this, and your parents will be contacted. You hear me?

3. EXT. SEATING. DAY

Billy is eating and chatting with his friends on the silver seats.

BILLY

That little shit Ned probably snitched on me, I reckon we go teach that kid a lesson.

BILLY'S FRIEND 2

Nah sorry, you're on your own here pal. I'm like bordering a suspension here so if he snitches on me. Well Ima just say that my parents are gonna kill me cuz.

BILLY'S FRIEND 1

Yeah same here, too much of a hassle for me and I really can't be bothered. Have fun haha.

4. INT. LIBRARY. DAY

Ned is working on the assessment by himself after class, Billy sees this and confronts him.

BILLY

(Trying to fake being polite.)

Please come with me, I need to show you something.

Ned reluctantly follows Billy out of the library.

4. EXT. LIBRARY. DAY

Ned follows Billy to the back of the library, a blind spot where no one can see them.

BILLY

TAKE WHAT YOU DESERVE, YOU SNITCH!

Billy sucker punches Ned.

5. MONTAGE. VARIOUS LOCATIONS. DAY

Billy runs up to Ned while he is walking casually and sticks gum in his hair.

BILLY

Now you have something to complain about.

On another day, while Ned is playing *Yu-Gi-Oh!* with his friends, Billy comes and slaps the cards of the table.

BILLY

Hah! I ruined your Pokemon game!

What are you gonna do?

Send your Pikachu to burn me?

On yet another day, whilst Ned is hanging out with some women, Billy "gossips" loudly to one of his friends.

BILLY

What? Ned Flans did that? Unbelievable!
He was really shoplifting? That's awful.

Billy's Friend 1:

(Whispering.)

Oh my god, are you trying to get a one-way ticket to the principal's office?

BILLY

You know what else?

Ned never keeps his promises.

I lent him money, and he never paid me back.

Billy's Friend 2:

(Whispering.)

Yeah, you better not drag us down there with you.

BILLY

Apparently I heard from someone that Ned cheats in his tests and steals girls' underwear.

Ned is visibly angry, fuming from his nostrils.

6. INT. EMPTY WSU CLASSROOM. DAY

The teacher hands Ned his grades for his next assignment.

TEACHER

Amazing, top in class again!

Everyone should use you as an example.

BILLY

(Coughing.)

Nerd.

TEACHER

Now-now.

Ned finally snaps and stands up.

NED

(Cutting off the teacher.)

Nah you're just mad for getting Ds in every test while I've been giving the D to your mother every night.

THE CLASS

(Including Billy's friends.)

Ooooo

BILLY

(Frustrated at losing his reputation.)

Oh yeah?

Miss, please come and help, your pet is clearly off his leash!

The teacher tries to recollect her class, but everyone is in uproar of the current situation. She leaves the class to seek further assistance.

Billy sees a glimpse of the Yu-Gi-Oh! deck in Ned's bag. He takes them, scrunches them, then tosses all of it in the bin.

BILLY

Ayy! Looks like I got it in this time.

NED

(Furious.)

No way you just did that! Do you know how much I spent on them?

BILLY

Cosmo Queen? Have you even felt the touch of a-

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

SILENCE.

The deputy principal's words echo throughout the classroom, everyone follows his orders without hesitation. Ned and Billy sit back down.

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Ned. Billy. Normally, I would have you sent to the office for causing such a ruckus but Ned usually being the bright student he is, and Billy I know how tough your family has had it for. Therefore, I will give you one last chance before you are expelled.

TEACHER

But now is the perfect opportunity for me to announce the next assignment, where everyone will be working in pairs.

Both Ned and Billy are in shock, already knowing their fate the teacher has in store for them.

TEACHER

Ned. Billy. You must set aside your differences as you are working together.

Billy tries to protest but the Deputy Principal gestures to stop him before he even opens his lips.

TEACHER

For this assignment, you will have to create an invention which will, in some way, benefit the environment.

Ned and Billy glare at each other, but after a while Billy looks at his desk in sadness, realising what will happen if he botches this assignment.

7. EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD. DAY

Walking outside, Billy calls Ned, who is at his own home.

BILLY

I will come over.

NED

Huh?

BILLY

I'm going to your house. To help you in our project.

NED

How did you even get my number?

BILLY

Don't worry about it.

NED

Okay, um well I live around...

Ned is interrupted by a doorbell at his house.

8. INT. NED'S HOUSE. DAY

Ned opens his door to see Billy outside.

NED

How did you get my address?

BILLY

I have ways. So, where do you keep your nerdy science stuff?

NED

Upstairs. In my room.

NED'S FATHER

Good afternoon boys, hey how long's it been since you brought a friend over Ned?

NED

Oh, we're just doing a project.

NED'S FATHER

Haha, hey...

Ned's father gestures at Billy, as for him to respond with his own name.

BILLY

Billy.

NED'S FATHER

Yeah, Billy. Don't drag down Ned's grades yeah? I'm joking, I'm sure my son chose you as a partner because he sees potential in you. My little champion's gonna be a big name some day if he keeps this up.

NED

Dad, it's just a project.

BILLY

That's no way to speak to your father.

NED'S FATHER

Yeah I know right. But it's okay, I know he doesn't understand social cues very well. Take care of him, okay? I'll be going out.

Ned's father leaves.

BILLY

That's no way to speak to your father.

NED'S FATHER

Yeah, I know right. But it's okay, I know he doesn't understand social cues very well. Take care of him, okay? I'll be going out.

BILLY

Wow, your father is nice.

NED

Yeah, but he's kind of embarrassing.

BILLY

But he's proud of you, I wish...

Billy notices he is becoming too sentimental and recollects himself.

BILLY

Nevermind, we're going off-topic, show me your proposal.

NED

The *Liquid Tree*. Basically, it can generate oxygen much more efficiently than regular trees. Meaning we could potential repair the *Antarctic Ozone Hole*.

BILLY

What? And here I thought we were just gonna create some remote solar-paneled toy car or a physical electricity generator.

NED

You think I get the highest marks from sticking to mediocrity? Come on, let's get your marks up.

BILLY

How does this thing work?

NED

Well basically with this seaweed, it can use photosynthesis to produce oxygen the same way trees can.

BILLY

Apparently you can take this further. It says here, that seaweed is macroalgae, but if we manage to find microalgae, then we can have make the *Liquid Tree* compressed and thus much more efficient!

NED

Wow, you're actually learning! But I've already considered that and it is difficult to obtain in large amounts. We need to collect them from a freshwater system from trees and stone

BILLY

What, you're afraid of nature? Ironic isn't it. Grab a knife or jar, let's do whatever it takes.

Reluctant at first, Ned obliges and follows Billy's plan.

9. EXT. RIVERBANK. DAY

Billy is seen skinning trees and stones, storing collected algae into a plastic bag, while Ned is collecting water samples into jars, where it is shown that they already have multiple jars and bags, meaning that they have been doing this for quite a while. Surprisingly, both Ned and Billy are content being in nature.

NED

So why me?

BILLY

Hmm?

NED

Out of everyone in class, why did you choose me? For the record, I did not snitch on you. Furthermore, back in Primary you were actually chill and liked the subject.

BILLY

Oh yeah, sorry about that dude. No its just, nevermind.

NED

We're out in nature, there's no one else around, no one to make fun of you, and we both know that you'd beat me up if I tried to.

BILLY

Haha yeah, well when I was young.

Billy flashes back to his past.

10. INT. BILLY'S HOUSE. DAY

BILLY'S DAD

(Faking niceness.)

Billy, come here. Your report is ready, I'm sure it's going to be great like your sister's!

Billy walks up to his father.

BILLY'S DAD

(Immediately switching to anger.)

HOW THE HELL are you still getting Ds in school? I've given you tutors, paid for the best schools, taught you myself. How is none of this getting through into your head? Are you stupid, or do you have a mental problem? Jeanne is already an up and coming lawyer, while you're still here giving me nothing but shit.

BILLY

(Pleading.)

I'll change, please don...

Billy's dad smacks Billy on the face, who falls to the floor.

BILLY'S DAD

BULLSHIT. You'll be nothing but dirt. The fuck is this? The only class you've done somewhat well in is *Environmental Science*. Only a B but still, where will that class even take you. You couldn't even do an actual science class like *Physics* or *Biology*. Unbelievable, what a waste of sperm.

11. EXT. RIVERBANK. DAY

NED

Wow. I can't believe you went through all of that.

BILLY

So yeah, please treasure your own father, one that actually sees your own talents and believes in you.

NED

Yes, I will.

BILLY

And remember, tell anyone about this...

Billy gestures a knife to the throat.

NED

Don't worry, your secret's safe with me.

BILLY

Look, but in all honesty I apologise for what I've done to you.

Billy reaches into his bag, and pulls out a Yu-Gi-Oh! pack.

BILLY

Here, I've bought you more Yu-Gi-Oh! cards to make up for what happened that one time.

NED

You think I haven't already bought more? Make it up by learning the game and playing with me another time.

BILLY

Bet.

The two continue their harvesting of microalgae.

12. INT. EMPTY WSU CLASSROOM. DAY

Ned and Billy present their assessment to the class

Ned

As we all know, planting trees is an effective way to reduce CO₂ levels in the atmosphere, but what about densely populated cities with limited green space?

Billy

We believe we found a solution to this problem with our very own innovative invention, the Liquid Tree.

Ned

It's essentially a photo-bioreactor that uses microalgae to bind carbon dioxide and produce pure oxygen through photosynthesis.

Billy

It's also incredibly efficient, with micro algae we believe it can be up to 50 times more efficient at photosynthesis than trees.

Ned

The Liquid Tree is also multifunctional. While it's reducing the air population, It's also a bench that you can sit on. It can charge your phone when it's on low battery and even has a solar panel, so the bench has lighting during the night.

The clock is shown nearing the end of class.

Billy

And that's our presentation on the Liquid Tree, thank you for listening.

Teacher

Wow, this is the best presentation in any class I have had, this could really be a future innovation well done guys.

The class gives a round of applause, Billy's friends in awe of Billy's hidden talent.

13. INT. TV STUDIO. DAY

The audience gives a round of applauses as Ned and Billy collect their award for the best innovative environmentally smart solutions while getting photographed.

Presenter

Congratulations to Ned & Billy for their remarkable success with the first Liquid Tree public domain opening.

Roll credits.

