

Cast the First Stone

Once again, the nation's Independence Day was fast approaching. Celebratory advertisements of various festivals dominated the news, and the surrounding towns in Bill and Linda's area were without exception.

Many bands visited the area's annual RibFest throughout the summer holiday. In the previous year, Bill and his family set out to enjoy a famous Southern rock band's performance there. Somehow, Bill found himself separated from his wife and children in the sweltering summer crowd. As his search for them grew futile, he resigned the quest in favor of rocking out to the band's harmonies close to the main stage with an aged biker girl. She serenaded him to a classic song about stepping away from drinking women trouble, "And this might be it for you ...". Her barbarian biker brother sneeringly tracked his actions, seething with protective menace, as if he and Bill were the aggressors that the song portrayed with such rattling, commemorative vigor.

This was a band Bill held in high regard. He was eighteen years of age when half their original members met their fates in a horrific crash, a day remembered by many music fans for decades to come. Bill and his good friend Hank mourned this loss outside his apartment building that night, slugging away Jack Daniel's and crooning into the evening, their scruffy blue jeans and jackets worn in dedicated honor of the fallen group. It was a drunk put on in desperate memorial of the legendary rock band, and they paid their respects in loud and unyielding earnest, knowing that they never again could see their martyred icons of insobriety.

For Linda, life had become very unfair. The holiday of drink and celebration was less than two weeks away, yet she felt hampered by these sudden court restrictions set forth by her psychotic husband.

Her attempt to get him to consume a gift of beer failed. The six packs she left for him remained intact in their house, and it was becoming all too clear that he was deadly serious about these new obligations.

Her lawyer drew out what she needed to do. Bill leveraged the children to his advantage, and Linda needed to break down his onslaught, showing that she was the better choice for their care, despite what opinions evaluation produced.

She could not believe that her celebrating was under attack. She remembered one early July weekend many years ago, when Bill spent time with friends down the road. When he finally returned home, he did not enter their sheltering structure. She discovered him asleep on the flat roof section of their home; a place of seclusion to relax and observe the fireworks displays lighting up the skies. When he did not come down to her, she called the police. They arrived quickly and coaxed him from his private bed of filthy hardened tar and tree leaves, even though his sleeping presence there was no threat to anybody, including himself.

His escapade caused a temporary cessation of illegal fireworks activity in his area, as perpetrators of these acts caught the approaching police presence on their radio scanners. Their private celebrations had to wait until the police evacuated him from the roof. From that day forward, the neighborhood knew him as "Roof Boy," the intoxicated man who caused a delay of their noisy holiday festivities.