

JUDGE  
ROY BEAN  
&  
WILD THING



## CHAPTER ONE

# BILLY THE KID IS GUILTY

It was a late spring afternoon in the Wild West town of Muleshoe. The setting sun shone brightly in the pretty blue sky. A group of happy hideout kids played a game of football on Main Street.

They didn't have a real football so they used a big ball of dried-up buffalo poop, tightly wrapped in long pampas grass.

Sheriff Tuff Brunson left the Muleshoe jail and led a prisoner across the street. The prisoner was Billy the Kid, the most

famous outlaw in the Wild West. Billy's wrists were handcuffed. He shuffled along in his leg irons. His head hung down and his eyes stared at the ground.

"Phew, what's that smell?" Tuff asked as he passed the kids. "It smells worse around here than it ever has."

"Our football. It kind of stinks every time you kick it," laughed Wandering Wanda. Wild Thing ran up and punched the ball with her nose. "I think it smells great," the pink fairy armadillo growled. "Just like my mash."

*I know the football smells bad, Tuff thought, but something else smells terrible. I wonder what it is?*

Wanda asked Tuff, "Hey, where are you going with your ugly prisoner, Billy the Kid? He doesn't look so scary since you arrested him in New Mexico and locked him up in the jail. Want to play football, Billy?" Wanda kicked the ball right at Billy's head, which

snapped back as the poop splattered around his ears. “Oops,” she laughed.

Wild Thing howled with laughter. “Good shot, girlfriend,” she said to her favorite hide-out kid. Billy glared at Wanda and whispered under his breath, “I’ll get you fer that.”

“How’s that, smelly?” Wanda laughed. “You’re all locked up.”

“Stop it, Wanda,” Tuff said. “I’m taking Billy in to Judge June. It’s time for his trial for shooting Crooked Jim.”

Tuff took out his bandana, wiped the poop from Billy’s head, then led his prisoner into the hut of the good witch and United States District Judge of the West, Junia “June” Beak. Tuff’s best friend Deputy Sadie Marcus joined them inside the front door. Wild Thing tagged along.

Judge June waited at her desk. Tuff and Sadie led Billy to a spot in front of the witch. *I hope she’s fair to him, Tuff thought, he is my old friend after all.*

“I find you guilty,” said Judge June as she stared hard at Billy the Kid. “For your crime, I sentence you to spend the rest of your life in jail. The US Army is going to keep you in their prison. I want you locked up and the key thrown to the bottom of the ocean.”

“But Judge June, you told me you would be fair,” Billy cried. “You know I was tryin’ to help Sheriff Robin and The Bobbies fight off the outlaw gang The Nasty Boys. I only shot Crooked Jim ’cause he shot Sheriff Robin.”

“Judge June, that seems unfair. Billy is our friend,” Sadie said.

“Yeah, he is but he broke the law,” Tuff reminded Sadie. “Right after I warned him to stop.”

“I am fair. Billy, you took the law into your own hands,” Judge June said with a stern voice. “You shot an unarmed man as he lay on the ground. You’re not fit to live among good kids. But if you’ll promise to behave yourself in jail I’ll see that you get out early.”

“Behave?” Billy said. “I’d rather eat cockroaches.”

“Me too,” said Wild Thing.

Judge June looked at Billy. “Fine, you had your chance. Tuff, hand this prisoner over to the Army troops at Camp Beak tomorrow morning,” she ordered.

Tuff and Sadie grabbed their old friend from New York City. Billy’s arms strained at the handcuffs and he kicked hard, jangling his leg irons, as they forced him out of the hut.

“No!” Billy screamed. “This ain’t fair.”

The children stopped their game and ran over to watch as Tuff and Sadie crossed the street with their prisoner. “Want another splash of buffalo poop, kiddo?” Wanda said.

“Enough, Wanda,” Tuff said as they walked into the Muleshoe jail.

He turned toward his old friend. “I’m very sorry, Billy, but Judge June was fair. She offered you a chance to shorten your punishment,” Tuff said. “You’ll have to stay here one more



night. We'll take you to Camp Beak in the morning."

Tuff and Sadie took off Billy's handcuffs and leg irons, put him back in his cell and locked the door.

Sadie turned up her nose. "What's that smell?" she asked. "It really stinks in here."

"I don't know," Tuff answered. "Actually I can't smell it now but there was a really horrible stench earlier. It seems to come and go."

Billy's face was a bright crimson red as he looked at Tuff. His voice was a low growl, like a mad bear's, as he said, "You'll never hand me over to the Army. I'll be long gone in the mornin'. And one more thing. You and me and Sadie might have been friends once. From now on we are sworn enemies. You better watch your backs."

"Sorry Billy but you're wrong about that. You can't escape. Sadie and I will stay here all night," Tuff said. "We've also got Deputy Sawbones to guard the outside."

“Not only am I leavin’, I’m takin’ The Parrot Gang with me.” Billy scowled.

Sadie laughed. “The Parrot Gang? You mean the miniature Parrots and their little horses? I guess they’re still in their birdcage in the next jail cell. Hey Parrots, are y’all still having a nap?”

“Let us out, let us out,” the Parrots squealed in their weak baby voices. “Neigh, neigh,” squeaked the tiny horses.

“Ever since they were shrunk by that lightning strike, that’s all they’ve been able to say.” Tuff smiled at Sadie. “‘Big Nose’ George, ‘Little Nose’ George and ‘Tiny Nose’ Peggy Parrot are no longer the meanest outlaws in the Wild West. But they’re definitely the smallest.”

“You cain’t keep me in here, Tuff,” Billy said. “And guess what? I got a surprise for you. I think I’ll also take Judge June with me when I leave Muleshoe. She won’t have her magical powers when I get her out of this town.”

“Now you’re just crazy,” Tuff said. But as he spoke, he felt a sudden breeze blow over him. “Sadie, what is it?” Tuff asked. “That awful smell has come around again.” His head started to spin as he watched Sadie collapse to the dusty wooden floor. Her eyes were tightly closed. He looked outside and saw Sawbones fall to the ground, fast asleep.

*What’s happening to us?* Tuff thought as his knees buckled and he fell to the floor. *I’m going to sleep. I must keep my eyes open. Oh dear...*

A huge black cloud blocked the evening sun. Darkness covered the little town.