

“Hey Robot,” he replies as he continues to loosen the nuts.

“He’s with me all ri’?” “Sorry Robot” they shout back, and start putting the wheels back on and tighten the nuts. “You’ll be all right from now on, they know you’re with me all ri’?”

“Bloody Hell,” says Billy, shaking his head. He never saw crime so close up before.

A few days later the band are getting a promo picture together at a studio. Billy sees an absolute knockout fixing Helen’s hair. She’s tall, model like, and has a European look about her, black hair and darker than normal skin. “Who’s that?” he asks Mel.

“Jack’s sister, Meg.”

Billy goes over to her and throws her a line. “Could you spoil me too?”

“Well, let’s have a look,” she says. She tosses his hair, and applies a little hair spray ... there’s chemistry, or at least Billy thinks so.

They get into place and the photographer says, “okay lads, big smile please.”

Meg sees Steo with his typical pinched look, "Steo, will ya smile for God's sake, you look like someone's trying to steal yer money or somethin'." They all laugh and Billy is immediately turned on by her sense of humor. Steo does his best, but still looks like he's in agony. Meg fusses over Helen's hair, and Billy is impressed that she's giving her time and help, tho' she's getting nothing for it.

The photographer takes a quick burst of shots. "Okay lads, I got it thanks, I'll get 'em to ya tomorrow PJ, all ri'?"

"Thanks Paul," says PJ, "are ye goin' for a jar lads?"

They all jump into their cars and head to the nearest pub. Everybody's having a laugh in the bar. Billy works his way towards Meg little by little, and soon comes face to face with her. "Hi, I'm Billy, that was nice of ya to come along tonight, Meg."

"Well, someone's gotta' look after them, the shower of wankers."

He laughs even tho' she's pretty cold. Billy does his best to break down her wall or whatever it is, there was definitely something. "Are ya a hairdresser?"

"Yea, I work from home 'til my son is a bit older." Billy is deflated. "Are ya married?"

Meg laughs, "God no, one little man in my life is enough right now." That was the first time she smiled and her face just lit up. She looked like butter wouldn't melt in her mouth, totally innocent, as she smiled, and Billy was hooked.

He decided he'd go for it. "Any chance you'd go out with a Corkman?"

"What's so special about a Corkman?"

"I don't know, but we're pretty good in bed, we hardly ever fall out."

Meg lets out a groaning laugh, "God, is that the best you can do?"

Billy persists, "Well, if you do come out with me, it'll be my first time walking out with a Dublin girl."

Meg seems a little tickled at this quaint country line, not the usual Dublin bravado she hears all the time. "Well I don't know," she smiles teasingly, "it's tough finding a sitter."

Billy goes all in, "Ah go on, I'm off on Friday, we can go for a drink, come on, just a drink." She hesitates..... "Come on," he says, "just a drink."

“Well all right Corkman, if I can find a sitter.”

Billy is delighted, but also taken aback. She has a kid, she’s way too young to have a kid he thought, but he still finds himself saying, “great, I’ll see ya on Friday, hey by the way, what’s your son called?”

“Sam,” says Meg smiling, and tells him how to get there. Billy is thrilled, his first date with a Dublin girl, and she’s gorgeous. He can’t wait for Friday night.

He drives the longish distance from the Southside of Dublin right through the city and out to the Northside. It took him almost an hour, but he doesn’t mind, it’s a new adventure, and he loves to drive his car. As he rings the bungalow’s doorbell, he takes in a nice neighborhood, garden perfect, exactly what he would expect of the little he knew of Meg so far. The babysitter opens the door. “Are youse the fella’ from Cork?” in her heavy Dublin accent.

“Yea,” Billy walks in to Meg doing some old lady’s hair in the kitchen.

Glancing at Billy, Meg tells him, “I’ll be ready in a few minutes.”

“Janey Meg, he’s a hunk,” says the old lady. Meg smiles with a bit of the Irish glint in her eye.

'Tis a nice house, spotless, with a fine big garden out back. He sits down and out comes her six-year-old son Sam, a cute- looking kid with long blonde hair, and definitely, not in the least bit shy... "Hey mister, me mam says you're a singer," in his Dublin accent.

"Yeah, and you must be Sam?"

"Yea, hey mister, my dog can sing."

"Really?" Billy is amused at this little guy, full of personality.

"I betcha' he's a better singer than you."

Meg smiles embarrassingly at Billy, "Sam that's not nice."

"No no that's all right," says Billy, "tell ya what Sam, I'll give you a pound if your dog's a better singer than me."

Sam is only too delighted to show off his dog's talents. "Ri', hey, Seamus you bastard, come 'ere."

Billy looks at Meg, taken aback at Sam's language. "It's a long story," she says, "tell ya later," and goes into her bedroom.

Out romps this Maltese Terrier, a little ball of white fluff with two huge black eyes, full of spunk, running full speed ahead straight at Sam. He looks at Sam hoping for a lump of sugar. "Sing Seamus." Seamus just barks. "No Seamus you bastard, sing." Sam does his imitation doggie howl, to get Seamus started, and, sure enough; the dog starts 'singing.'

He starts with a high howl that he brings all the way down without a breath, then starts again, and goes all the way up into high falsetto, and then down again. If he were human, he'd have a career, as he has a three-octave range. He stares at Sam and wags his tail, which you can barely see, hoping for a lump of sugar. Billy gets out a pound and hands it to Sam. Sam is delighted with himself, and gives the dog a lump of sugar.

"You're right Sam," says Billy, "he's a better singer than me." They all enjoy a laugh, even the old lady tries to laugh, but gets a fit of coughing from a lifetime of chain-smoking.

Billy lays on the charm; "you look marvelous my dear."

"Meg's the best, she's been through a lot, you treat her nice now," she says through her coughing.

Meg comes out of her bedroom looking stunning. She was wearing the same baggy sweats doing the ladies hair as she was the first time he saw her. Now

she's in a tight skirt and matching blouse and heels, and looks smoking hot. Billy thought he was looking at Miss Ireland herself.

She sees his sports car and is impressed as they leave. "Janey, I thought you were a starving musician like the rest of the lads."

"I am, I worked my balls off for this car."

"Fair play to ya, how fast can it go?" Billy guns it and tears down the road 'til they get to the pub. He parks and blows the horn, an old antique car sound he had installed for the craic, blares out. She laughs and they walk into the pub. They sit up at the bar, and order.

"That's a great son you've got there."

"Yea, he's a character."

"And his Dad?"

"A right bollix, biggest mistake of me life."

"Yea, but you've got Sam."

"Yea," and she smiles.

"So, tell us, how did the dog get his name?"

“Well when I got pregnant with Sam, we quickly married and it was all right for a while. He gave Sam a lot of attention, more than he gave me,” ... as she gazes off into the distance. “Then last year he met some other one and he left, just blurted it out one day and left, just like that. She wasn’t the first one either.

“Sam the poor little guy cried and cried for his dad, so my dad brought us to a kennel last Christmas and he let Sam pick out a dog. He asked Sam what he was going to call it and he said Seamus. We were bringing him home in the car, and he puked all over the back seat. Me dad screamed ‘Seamus you bastard!!!’ Sam thought it was hilarious, so it stuck and that’s how he got his name.”

Billy looked at this gorgeous girl, totally hurt by a prick who obviously didn’t appreciate her. She developed this hard exterior to protect herself. But Billy just saw her soft side, and he felt he was being included in her small group with whom she could be herself. Sipping their drinks, they are oblivious to anyone else in the pub, having a laugh, getting to know each other. After a less speedy drive home, Billy maneuvers a long goodnight kiss. Billy drives home in seventh heaven.