

A bizarre story: Death arrives on colorful wings

William Bonney, better known as 'Kid', entered Walter Vogelweide's shabby flat using the landlord's master key with a wicked grin on his face. The room smelled of despair and had the familiar odour of broken dreams. Walter, an old pensioner, sat trembling on a worn armchair, while the collection specialist, who had little remorse, moved around the room like a predator in search of prey.

Kid laughed ruthlessly as he looked at Walter's meagre possessions.

"How can you live like that? Some old geezers are real neglected bums!"

Following his sadistic instincts, the giant bill collector decided to mock the frail old man.

"Walter, my poor old friend, you always manage to manoeuvre yourself into the craziest of difficulties. You can't pay your rent again, can you? Mr Scrooge is very annoyed, but the old crook is such a considerate and generous landlord. Didn't he raise your rent only after you fixed your water heater? "

The ungrateful tenant raised his head, his eyes bearing witness to years of struggle, defeats and a long working life that ultimately left him with financial resources that were too little to live and too much to die for.

"Mr Bonney, I beg you, give me some more time. I'll find the money, I swear."

Kid laughed again, a sound more reminiscent of the barking of a mangy jackal than human joy. He stepped closer to the pensioner, leaned one hand on his shoulder and replied with a cold smile.

"Walter, Walter, I hear that every time from bums like you. Time is money, my friend, and I'm not here to hear stories. I'm here to see results."

With these words, he pulled a pistol out of his coat and carelessly placed it on the small table next to Walter. The pensioner stared at the gun, his heart pounding with fear. It was only a gas pistol in the shape of a fat Colt Peacemaker, but as expected, the defaulting debtor didn't realise that.

The goal-oriented bill collector savoured the moment with sick joy.

"Today is payday, you old wreck. Either you finish your debt now or you'll be finished. Bring me the dough now or you'll see how ugly the world can really be. And believe me, you don't want to see that."

"Please, Mr Bonney, have mercy. I'm just a poor, penniless old man. Have a heart."

How the brutal money collector enjoyed his victim's tear-strangled pleas and involuntarily let out a sardonic laugh.

"Crying won't do you any good now, Grandad. Either you pay with money or in the final way!"

Slowly, Bonney stowed his weapon away again and strolled leisurely to the only dirty window in the room and opened it.

"Maybe a little air will clear your decrepit head. Make sure you don't accidentally fall out of the window, Walter. From the

fifth floor like that, you fall pretty far!"

The reference to one of the strange accidents that have recently occurred in the run-down prefabricated building of the noble Scrooge finally convinced the defaulting debtor to hand over the last of his money, which was actually intended for grocery shopping, to the dirty grinning debt counsellor of a special kind.

"There you go, you old goat," Bonney's voice dripped with triumph and scorn, "But that's not enough, the few bucks aren't even enough for my expenses. Let's go and see if you haven't hidden anything else of value, you old bandit!"

Kid searched the unheated, miserable flat as if he were looking for a hidden treasure. His gaze penetrated the barren rooms as he searched for other valuables in a similar way to the plundering hordes of Genghis Khan, which he was able to snatch from old Walter. Suddenly he came across a dusty casket hidden under old newspapers.

With a cynical grin, Kid opened the casket and found costume jewellery that had once belonged to Walter's wife. The sparkling but worthless pieces were reminiscent of times gone by when luck was still a regular guest in Walter's life. Bonney held up the jewellery and looked at it mockingly.

"You old criminal, are you trying to cheat me? You know I can get very angry when people try to trick me!"

Walter, who was weighing up the last moments of his life, nevertheless tried to retain some dignity.

"Please, take what you want, but leave me the memories of my wife. That's all I have left."

The customer-oriented money collection specialist laughed gleefully and put the jewellery in his pocket, well aware of the worthlessness of the pieces.

"What a pity, you old fart. You should have thought about that before you didn't pay your rent. But I'm being generous today. You've begged for mercy so nicely, so I'll let you live. For now. Or shall we stage a little jump out of the window, then your misery will be over and I'll love to hear it clapping! What do you think?"

How the unscrupulous bill collector loved to play with his victims. Of course, he wouldn't do anything to the old man, because dead people without useful heirs are unfortunately not in a position to pay off debts of any kind, although the tax office sometimes sees things differently. Grinning, Bonney turned to the open window and couldn't believe his eyes, because a parrot was sitting on the windowsill, fixing the cyclops-like debt collector with piercing emerald-green eyes.

The bird itself was of uncanny beauty and strange splendour. Its plumage shimmered in dark colours, as if it had captured the shadow itself. Each feather seemed to tell a story, dark and mysterious.

"Oh, my dear master, I'll get you your food in a minute! Forgive me."

Kid now turned towards Walter, completely bewildered by his gentle and confusingly submissive words, to see the frail pensioner hurrying at an unusual pace towards the neglected kitchen. It almost seemed as if the old man had blanked out the presence of his torturer.

"Hey old bastard, did they shit in your brain? Stop!"

The bill collector realised in astonishment and then with tremendous anger that his otherwise so compliant customer was not

responding to his order. Should he now chastise the old man and beat the shit out of him? No, he knew something better that would also fulfil his sadistic inclinations.

"I suppose that's your favourite and only friend? Let's see how easy it is to slaughter that fucking animal?"

The pensioner still did not react and the tough collection specialist took action. Bonney approached the animal with cruel determination and suddenly stopped when he looked into the parrot's hard, green eyes. A vague feeling of fear paralysed his steps. It was as if the bird was looking into his soul and letting him sink into the abyss of himself.

"You'll pay for that!"

After the cawing words, a diabolical laugh that seemed to be out of this world came from the beak of the unusual animal, which then rose up and flew away through the open window. Bonney literally froze, while all his sick intentions melted in the strange echo of the parrot's laughter like the polar ice caps in the fantasies of climate activists.

"That was Sheytan Ibn Esenco!"

The brutal bill collector flinched and turned to his bird friend, who had returned in the meantime with a bowl of food in his hand and was giving him a pitying look. Caught up in a certain confusion, Bonney came to the conclusion that the old man had obviously lost his mind completely.

"I don't care what your fucking bird's name is! Next time it's your turn, you and the flying rat!"

Still filled with indefinite panic, Kid literally stormed out of the flat, so that he missed the tenant's last remark.

"Hardly, I'll never see you again!"

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Full of anger at himself and his supposed weakness, Bonney left the slummy tower block to meet Jesús James, also known as Jesse, in the dingy car park. His colleague and partner in crime with the name of a Galilean carpenter, who became famous for his alleged miracles and rather unpleasant ending, was already waiting in front of the duo's fat BMW, grinning broadly.

"Old Swede, have you finally finished? I've already checked the rubbish bins out of sheer boredom and caught some old woman looking for food in the stinking rubbish. How she moaned when I took her last five bucks as a fine and then dumped her in the bin. Dude, you have to have fun! What took you so long?"

Jesús, who saw himself as a macho man among macho men, loved to boast about his supposed toughness.

"It took longer than I thought with the old bloke Vogelweide. I had to put a lot of pressure on him, but there wasn't much to be gained from the old geezer!"

James shook his ugly Medusa head reproachfully so that his snake-like, greasy dreadlocks

"But the boss won't like that at all! You know how ruthless Mr Scrooge can be in his anger. Just think of Johnny Ringo, who Doc Holliday had dumped in the town sewer with concrete shoes because he didn't have 50 cent."

Jesse briefly interrupted his philippic for unsuccessful bill collectors, but continued in a patronising tone to brag again about one of his 'heroic deeds'

"Kid, you're too soft! Last week I had a tour of the Rue Morgue with Bloody Bill to collect a special payment for Mr Scrooge. Anyway, there was a cripple living on the twentieth floor who I plundered to death - I love it! When I then repossessed his wheelchair, he actually talked back. Well, I held it over his balcony railing to calm him down a bit and accidentally let it go. The sheriff said it was one of the strangest accidents he'd ever come across. The boss is grateful for every one of his run-down shacks, which he can sell at horrendous rents to needy high earners. Don't forget that we've had a profitable housing shortage for some time now!"

The gloomy, dilapidated surroundings of the prefabricated building provided the perfect backdrop for Jesse's adventure story with a socio-economic background.

Kid frowned, but inside, he was dying of envy.

"You really are a tough dog, Jesse. Even by my standards. I couldn't have done the disabled thing. I mean, the thing with the accident."

Jesús laughed recklessly and felt like the uncrowned king of testosterone-driven masculinity, like a not too intelligent gorilla.

"You have to earn respect. People need to know that we're not to be trifled with. The law of the road is tough, and we're tougher."

Bonney nodded in agreement.

"Sure dude, respect is everything! But everyone has their own methods! But for me it's more like: if you can't pay, you're out of luck."

Jesse James just shrugged his shoulders.

"You talk way too much, Pal. This is about survival. You and I are the terrors of these streets. People fear us. And that's a good thing. That's what me and my brother Frank learnt from old Bill Anderson back when we were guerrillas! "

Kid made a respectful face and felt tempted to show off his brutality as well.

"You are not a human being, Jesús. You're a monster in human form. By the way, I relieved the old fart of the last mementos of his deceased wife!"

The merciless collector proudly presented the stolen costume jewellery as if he were the king of thieves.

Jesse stared at the precious objects, then at Bonney and laughed mockingly.

"That's a great catch! Dude, the jewellery is really worth nothing. You can't even get rid of them at a flea market!"

Grinning smugly, Kid threw the stolen mementos of a great love into a dirty, neighbouring rubbish bin.

"I know that! Valuable or not, it's about being respected. As you've already said: I want people to know that we're not to be

trifled with. That's my method."

"Kid, we're really on the same wavelength. I can imagine that this story will amuse the boss and he'll forgive you for your meagre haul. If not, I'll talk to him and that'll be the end of it! We're almost like blood brothers and one stands up for the other. But we should make our move now!"

"Before we go: Did you know that the bloody idiot Vogelweide has a parrot? I wanted to show the daft old man who's in charge here and finish the poo bird off, but the bastard got away from me. I tell you, the old git was completely out of his depth. The git said his favourite was called Ibn Esenco. Funny, isn't it?"

The thwarted parrot murderer looked expectantly at the king of all macho impersonations in anticipation of an outburst of mirth, but his face contorted into a fearful grimace.

"Like Sheytan ibn Esenco? You're joking, right? This is no ordinary parrot. He's the boss of the dreaded parrot mafia. A real devil."

Jesú's unexpected reaction initially triggered an astonished giggle from the money-collecting comedian.

"Sure, mafia. Great joke, you've got to be kidding me a bit!"

"You idiot! You've been collecting money for the boss abroad for too long and you're not the smartest anyway. Man, you've been back here for a fortnight! This monster is no ordinary parrot. Ibn Esenco is known for his cruel methods. It is said that he is a direct descendant of the legendary terror bird of Baskerville. He once chased Sherlock Holmes through the deadly swamps of Mordor and drove Hercule Poirot mad with his obscenely cruel screams."

Kid looked at Jesse with wide eyes as the atmosphere suddenly became ominously thick.

"That's complete nonsense, Jesse. It's all a bad joke, isn't it?"

Jesús James' hands were shaking like those of an alcoholic in the absence of refreshments. He wiped the sweat from his forehead.

"You wretched fool, this demon in the shape of a bird shot the infamous Beer King of Mallorca and his family like mangy dogs to free his parrot people from bondage. He literally had Abu el Mot and his clan slaughtered. Sorry mate, I'm off now and you should get out of here as quickly as possible. But stay away from me, you're on your own now. The parrot mafia never sleeps and never forgives!"

While Kid was in a kind of state of shock from the previous explanations and friendly remarks, his faithful partner hurried to the aforementioned BMW, trying to open the driver's door.

Unfortunately, this valiant and noble endeavour did not succeed, as the clang of a butcher's knife cut through the darkness, its blade moving with terrifying speed towards Jesse's skull. A shiver rippled through Bonney's spine as he heard the horrifying sound of steel meeting bone and flesh. Thus the now dethroned macho king's strategic retreat came to a premature and inglorious end, as it was difficult to escape with a split head.

While Jesse sank to the ground as a result of the successful surgical procedure, a crazy, almost demonic laugh echoed from above.

Surprised, the completely horrified Bonney looked up and saw a colourful parrot spinning above him with an ominous gleam in its eyes. The bird's mad laughter mingled with the eerie shadows of the night.

"We'll get you, you can't escape! But let's play first!"

With a sickening shriek, the murderous beast slipped away into the leaden darkness.

Frozen with shock and doubting his sanity, William Bonney was still at the scene of the crime when the police arrived some time later.

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A short time after his extremely unspectacular arrest, William Bonney found himself in a musty interrogation room at the 13th police station, which had the charm of a somewhat shabby death cell and seemed to become more constricted with every breath he took. Sitting opposite him were two gentlemen from the investigating police force who were trying to make some sense out of his nonsensical ramblings about flying monsters and sneaky pensioners.

Chief Superintendent Rex, an angular man with a look that said more than his words, scrutinised the prisoner of Absurdistan with a certain nonchalance. Dressed in his elegant designer suit, financed by political and underworld patrons who appreciated the charity he practised, he wondered what financial potential was waiting for him here. His assistant, Inspector Pierrot, who at first glance looked more like a circus clown, sat next to him and, as usual, didn't seem to realise the seriousness of the situation.

Rex, whose deep, barking voice resembled a thundering storm, began to pierce the atmosphere.

"Kiddy, Kiddy, Kiddy... are you kidding me? Now let's talk straight. What strange things do you do? Stupid accidents like the one with your colleague have the potential to cause us all a lot of trouble. Mr Scrooge is a little upset about the death of his employee, but has generously asked me not to shoot you on the run right now, but to investigate for him first. Your boss is a true gentleman and always so generous with unofficial donations. Now tell me what really happened and maybe your boss will show mercy. But you'll still have to pay me a fine for an administrative offence due to gross negligence."

Bonney, with a slight tremor in his voice, began to tell his story.

"So there we were collecting the rent for Mr Scrooge. I mean, me and Jesse spoke really fairly and seriously with the tenants. It was going really well until I met this bastard Vogelweide. But I had no idea! Everything was great and out of gratitude, because I cheered him up so lovingly, the old man forced me to take his deceased wife's worthless jewellery! I ask myself: why me? I'm a nice guy after all!"

With tears of self-pity in his eyes, the debt collection specialist with the golden heart lost his voice. The busy Chief Superintendent had listened attentively up to that point and nodded understandingly at the kindly collector's explanations, like a Catholic priest at the confession of a special friend of little boys. Pierrot, on the other hand, mumbled something to himself that sounded vaguely like "darn tootin'" and "y'all".

Despite all his criminal understanding, Rex felt compelled to push the matter a little further.

"Mr Scrooge is not to be envied, what with all the anti-social and parasitic lot who take such advantage of his generosity. But

Kiddy, get to the point! Why and how exactly did you split good Jesse's head open?"

"That wasn't me! I know this sounds completely insane, but there was this parrot. He must have dropped the knife right on Jesse!"

The lead investigator's posture tensed and a horrified expression full of dark foreboding came into his eyes.

"A parrot, you say, you unlucky bird?"

"With my mum's non-existent innocence, the killer was a parrot and was laughing maniacally! Jesse was talking some nonsense about a mafia beforehand and then there was the other bastard with that old stinker. I wanted to wring the flying bastard's neck. Ibn Esenco, the old cock sucker called him."

The words "Ibn Esenco" echoed through the interrogation room like an evil curse, and the usually so stoic Commissioner Rex now seemed to lose his grip for good, while Pierrot gesticulated wildly and stammered something about a "goddamn avian apocalypse".

The room was drowned in a tense silence, framed only by Pierrot's continuing, clownish pantomime. Finally, the chief investigator broke the leaden silence.

"You fucking lunatic wanted to kill the head of the parrot mafia? That's not true, you psycho! Now I know who killed your mate! It was Jack the Knife, the killer parrot from Ripperstreet and one of Esenco's most loyal vassals. He gave Sweenie Todd, the diabolical barber, the last shave in no time at all. It would have been easy for the bird to kill you. They must have big plans for you and only slaughtered Jesse to scare you. Man, I wouldn't want to be in your shoes! So..."

The rudely torn open door and the uniformed man entering with a deathly pale face interrupted the Chief Superintendent's flow of words quite drastically.

"What is it, Earp? I'm here in an important meeting!"

"Sorry to interrupt, sir, it's really important. We've just received word that Hand Grenade Kikki and his bloody death squad of killer parrots have razed Mr Scrooge's estate to the ground. It must have been hell! Scrooge, his family and all his bodyguards are dead!"

The Chief Superintendent shook his unwise head in horror.

"But that was a real fortress! No chance of error, Wyatt?"

"Completely out of the question! But it gets worse. Charon, Ibn Esenco's black messenger of death, has turned up outside the police station and given us an ultimatum: Either we release Bonney so they can judge him or we'll get a visit from Machine Gun Lora!"

Rex let out a sound that somewhat resembled a whimper and looked at his prisoner with an expression in his eyes that reminded him of a beaten street dog.

"Kiddy, you arse, what have you brought here? Machine-gun Lora is the worst Terminator in the Parrot Mafia and has single-handedly sent the entire Murder Incorporated to bloody hell."

The lead investigator stood up like a jack-in-the-box and roughly pulled Kid up.

"Get out of here, Bonney. Get out before the bird gang catches us all too. I want nothing more to do with this."

"Chief Superintendent, you have to protect me! These birds will kill me!"

"With all the trouble you've caused us, you deserve it. Go and fuck off already! Guard, get that bloke out!"

With reluctant hesitation, Bonney was dragged out of the interrogation room and the police station by several law enforcement officers.

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After Willie the Kid was kicked out of the police station and stood up from the horizontal position caused by this treatment, he involuntarily spotted a black cockatoo that had made itself comfortable on a gas lantern opposite him.

"You can't hide anywhere, the master always sees you. He will strike when you least expect it. Your fate is sealed."

Surprised, Bonney looked at the feathered prophet of doom and his humble mind sank into the animal's pitch-black eyes, which promised him an imminent sojourn in the realm of Hades.

Animal fear gripped the doomed man, who now began an aimless flight through the gloomy, deserted streets of the city. His feathered nemesis doggedly pursued him from the streetlamp through the abysses of lonely mercilessness. In his croaking tone, he warned Bonney in a continuous loop of the omnipresent danger emanating from Sheytan Ibn Esenco.

Finally, completely exhausted, the fugitive reached a dingy, littered alleyway that stretched out before him like a forgotten nightmare. In the flickering neon light, the winged nightmare settled down on a rusty dustbin. The demonic bird's eyes glowed with a power that heralded disaster. Bonney stumbled backwards, stared at the black-feathered monster and realised that the parrot mafia would grant him no mercy.

"I will wait for you in the realm of the dead to torment you for all eternity. The Sheytan will soon judge you. Your end is near."

The cockatoo's grim words drilled into Bonney's mind, trapping him in an endless nightmare.

The Sheytan's messenger of death spread its wings and flew away, leaving Kid in the darkness, haunted by the inescapable certainty of doom.

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Bonney panted heavily as he staggered through the labyrinth of darkness. The whispering of the dilapidated facades bore witness to muffled despair and lifetimes of nightmares.

A cold wind caressed the dark walls of the winding alleyway, which seemed to be populated by shadowy figures and creeping fears. One almost had the impression that at any moment Potter Harris, the lord of the undead, would rise from a stinking dustbin.

At the end of his way, redemption awaited the tormented man in the form of Sheytan Ibn Esenco, who was majestically

enthroned on a huge golden cage. The dark king of the mafia-like parrot people was surrounded by countless of his vassals, whose blaze of colour glorified the greatness of their ruler.

"The hour of your judgement has come, William Bonney. Your destiny has now been fulfilled. The law of the road now devours you. No other memory of you will remain but a brief, fearful whisper from an unknown fool who dared to challenge the Lord of the Underworld. In the end, you will be forgotten as an insignificant episode during my reign of terror!"

Exhausted and fatalistic, Bonney listened to the judgement of his feathered judge, whose melodiously cruel voice paused for a moment to finish in a mocking tone.

"However, I haven't had such a great time since I killed Kennedy and rubbed out Dutch Schultz. So I want to give you a quick death. Pat and Garret, my asesinos locos, will take care of you now."

After the judgement was pronounced, there was a meaningful, oppressive silence, which was suddenly broken by a gunshot. Williw the Kid staggered forwards, his gaze staring into nothingness. Pat and Garret, the murderous parrot twins, had silently approached from behind in gliding flight. In their clawed feet they held an old but well-maintained single-action revolver.

The birds in their magnificent plumage lowered their beaks and stared at Bonney, who lay lifeless on the ground. The cold breath of the apocalypse lay over the scene as the parrot mafia took its toll.

Ibn Esenco cawed triumphantly as the night kept its secret and the neon lights flickered, telling grim legends of Sheytan. The darkness, witness to the incident, spread the leaden blanket of oblivion over the scene, and the parrot mafia ruled mercilessly over their realm of eternal damnation.

The reader may rest assured that any resemblance to living, dead or undead persons or parrots is purely coincidental. May the Sheytan not get you after reading this text!

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