

BILL POSTERS

Bill trusted no man. Somebody somewhere was always trying to rip him off or rub him out. His enemies were countless. Some count his days as numbered. But it hadn't always been this bleak. Years earlier, Bill had been the pin up boy for free speech. A shameless self-promoter, he carried any message, anywhere, anytime. Garage sales, upcoming local events, lost and founds or political propaganda. It made no difference to him. Bill was all things to all people and his star shone brightly. There was just one thing. Bill was an outlaw and no By Law would give him the legitimacy he so dearly wanted.

Bill had no boundaries. His promiscuity was legendary. So was his popularity. Bill represented freedom of speech at a time when citizens were oppressed by an over reaching government in an over regulated society. Naturally, it wasn't long before he'd raised the ire of the establishment. Those in favour of change worshipped Bill. Those in the corridors of power had other ideas.

Among senior members of parliament was a general feeling of paranoia. Bill Posters and his brigade could de-stabilise the status quo. The rule makers believed flagrant proliferation of unsanctioned propaganda marked the beginning of a revolution. And as they grew in confidence would eventually break free from the yoke of government. Anakie had already gained a foothold in the outskirts of Geelong and if nothing was done, soon enough the country would be on its knees.

The politicians were fuming. Who the hell did this Bill Posters guy think he was? His crusade couldn't go on unchecked. And so it was agreed. This public menace had to be stopped. Society needed to immunise itself against the scourge of Bill. The boil on the nose of democracy was to be lanced. And the charging horsemen were the government. Their decree was simple. Legislate to eradicate.

The writing was on the wall. Bill needed an ally, and fast. He aligned himself with Bob Brown who was Green and supported freedom of speech. Bob was well known as both a maverick and a lovedick. Bill needed political support and hoped with Bob in his pocket to be given a reprieve from obsolescence. But docile Bob did Jack for Bill. Bill was in Hansard. Bob was in love. Bill was Brownless and on the run...Backwards.

Bill felt a rage towards a society that once lauded his vision. The Parliamentarians had turned him into a monster. An outcast condemned by society. He was unwelcome everywhere and his presence anywhere in the land risked prosecution. Bill had been banished and felt the isolation that comes with alienation. People wanted him shredded into pulp, stripped bare from wherever he lay. His promiscuity was now a crime. Overnight he'd become a villain, a public enemy of sorts. Surely, Bill had rights? Wrong. Bill had problems.

The appalling state of double standards fuelled his desire to be heard. The audacity displayed by rule makers and other high flyers beggared belief. Moreover, the contempt hypocritical governors had for the electorate was galling. How could they deem themselves worthy of public trust after years of eroding it through scandalous affairs, rorts on the public purse, cronyism and other cover ups made possible by protectionist bureaucracy? But what Bill found most vexing was the public's readiness to accept spin over substance shrugging indiscretions off as human frailty. The people conceded the truth was out there but nowhere near them. Bill wanted to close the gap.

Bill had trust issues. And it's no wonder. He'd always had his back to the wall and had survived many battles. Legislation wouldn't stop him. And he wouldn't be silenced by the fat cats either. No way. However time was marching on and the future looked bleak for the persecuted Posters. He was very sick. Years of exposure to toxic glue fumes had taken its toll. Ironically, it was glue that kept him together in the beginning. Now it was his undoing as he was losing his grip in a changing world. A new breed of messenger had arrived and Bill had to step aside.

The Graffiti artist had emerged from the shadows and carried their message in a can. Nobody cared much for their colourful contributions. Much less understood what they meant. Sadly, it was clear to Bill. He knew what this meant.

It was his Death Certificate.

Few mourned Bill's death. His legacy limped along through Billboard, Hawker and Canvasser. But life on the streets proved difficult for them. Nobody wanted to hear or see them and consequently were forced underground. A new underclass emerged. They were called "Junkies" and peddled all manner of messages, most of which were rubbish.

Don't shoot the Messenger. Hear them Out.

Then Take Them Out

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