



## *Billy* by Laura Roybal

**Subjects:** Identity—Fiction; Fathers and sons—Fiction; Parental kidnapping—Fiction

**Awards:** Best Books for Young Adults

**Book Lists:** Gifted

**Props:** Cowboy hat, toothpick



*(Wear cowboy hat as Billy and turn right; use toothpick as Charlie and turn left throughout this first conversation)*

**Billy:** “Oh great, here comes Charlie, the town sheriff. Why didn’t I wait at the gas station for a bus ride home instead of stopping for lemonade at the bar first?”

**Charlie:** “Fighting again Billy?”

**Billy:** “I didn’t start nothin.”

**Charlie:** “You never do, but you’re pretty quick to finish it, aren’t you? And you got yourself suspended.”

**Billy:** “Only for 3 days.”

**Charlie:** “Who were you fighting?”

**Billy:** “Joe Gallegos. Rosemary was yelling at him to leave her alone. So, I just helped her out. I didn’t hit him right away. It’s just he gets to me. I end up wanting to wipe the parking lot with him.”

**Charlie:** “You like to fight Coyote? Or did your daddy just raise you too rough?”

**Billy:** “No, I don’t like to fight. It’s just when a woman is being picked on I feel honor bound to defend her. And don’t blame my dad. I’ve only been with him for five years.”

**Charlie:** “Yeah, all right, but you need to get out of here. I’ll take you home.”

That wasn’t a great start to Billy’s day but the night was going just fine. He made up with his girlfriend, Dana, and they were hanging out with friends at that same bar, the only place in town they could go. Then Joe showed

up. He was definitely looking for a fight and started ragging on Billy right away. But Billy played it cool. Then Joe started in on Dana and that was too much. Billy let him have it. Immediately there was a full scale brawl! The State police came, rounded everyone up, took them to jail and sent for parents. Billy was pretty sure that the police just wanted to scare everybody and that they wouldn’t really do anything. But he was worried about what his dad would say. All Billy’s friends had been picked up by their parents when Charlie came to see him. Charlie said the police had run everyone’s fingerprints through their computer—just routine—but Billy’s fingerprints had a match.

*(Use toothpick when Charlie)*

“You’re Will Campbell,” Charlie said. “Your dad kidnapped you from a Little League baseball practice in Iowa 5 years ago. I called your uncle, Dave Campbell, and he’s on his way here to get you.”

Memories of that kidnapping came flooding back to Billy—how scared he was. He hadn’t known his real dad at all then. He’d wanted his aunt and uncle to find him. Why hadn’t they? Why hadn’t they looked for him 5 years ago? Now it was too late. He was Billy Melendez now. “No,” he said. “Where’s my dad? I want to go home with him.”

“That’s not going to happen,” said Charlie. “You’re going with Dave Campbell. Legally, you belong to him. Your dad kidnapped you and he’s in big trouble.”

“What do you mean?” said Billy. “You expect me to just walk away from my whole life—my dad, my friends, my girl, my horse?”

Charlie shook his head. “That’s exactly what you’re going to do.” *(Hold up book)* *Billy* by Laura Roybal.

