

KILLIST

By Emmett Loverde

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THE KILLIST
By Emmett Loverde

Cast of Characters

The Farmer	(21 lines)
The Killist.....	(114 lines)
Miss Emily	(56 lines)
Sheriff Winslow Stick	(51 lines)
The Townsperson	(3 lines)
Dick Stallion.....	(29 lines)
Maw.....	(46 lines)
Paw	(42 lines)
Chief Rain-Snow	(9 lines)

Place

A dry, lonely town in the middle of nowhere in the Old West.

Time

Back in them olden days. High noon.

SCENE 1

Scene:

The Old West. Every cliché is true. Hot wind wails across an empty desert (whatever that sounds like). A battered signpost points to “BONE DRY, THAT-A-WAY” (Stage Right).

At Rise:

A shifty-looking FARMER is sneaking across the stage from stage right. He is clearly nervous about being followed. Out of the shadows steps THE KILLIST, a dangerous-looking fellow.

KILLIST: You there.

FARMER: (*Shocked.*) How do, Mister? You're not from around these parts

KILLIST: What parts are these?

FARMER: Like the butcher always says, “Parts is parts.”

KILLIST: (*Cocks gun and points it at FARMER.*) I'll ask again...

FARMER: N-no need to get huffy, Mister! Just making friendly conversation.

KILLIST: Where am I?

FARMER: About five miles up yonder that-a-way is Bone Dry, Arizona—the purtiest little town you ever did see!

KILLIST: If it's so purty, why are you sneaking away?

FARMER: Ain't sneakin' nowhere. I gots to work this here field if me and the wife are gonna make it through the winter.

KILLIST: This field's dead. It looks like nothing ever grew here.

FARMER: Yep. Late start this morning.

KILLIST: It's November.

FARMER: Late start this year.

KILLIST: How do you and the wife survive?

FARMER: I...well...I been busy with that there other field over yonder. Nice crop, that was.

KILLIST: That field's empty, too.

FARMER: No—the **other** field—over the hill!

KILLIST: There are no hills. I've never seen anyplace so flat. (*Points gun again.*) You haven't worked at all, have you?

FARMER: Okay, okay! I ain't worked none nohow! Now would you put away your dang gun?

KILLIST: What have you been doing?

THE KILLIST

FARMER: (*Ashamed.*) Playin' cards.

KILLIST: Is this even your field?

FARMER: No.

KILLIST: You owe somebody in town, and you've got nothing left to hock, so you figured you'd just walk across the desert.

FARMER: (*Hopefully.*) Perfect day for it.

KILLIST: And your wife?

FARMER: Hocked her, too.

KILLIST: You're a pathetic, sorry little man.

FARMER: I feel so awful! (*Sniffs sadly.*) But talking to you, why, I'm sure feeling better. Are you a priest?

KILLIST: (*Fires.*) Nope.

FARMER: (*Dying.*) You...shot...me...

KILLIST: That's what I do.

The FARMER falls to the ground.

I'm The Killist.

FARMER: (*Gasping breath.*) Never...heard of you...

KILLIST: (*Ominously.*) You will.

FARMER: (*Almost gone.*) When? I won't last...much longer...

KILLIST: Soon. With your help, everyone around here will know my name.

FARMER: (*Curtains.*) Help? How'm I gonna...help?

KILLIST: They'll point at me and whisper, "There goes The Killist, the meanest, toughest, smartest, orneryest outlaw in the Old West!"

FARMER: Is "orneryest" a word?

KILLIST: That's enough small talk. Now run along and tell everybody you've been killed by The Killist!

FARMER: (*Death rattle.*) That tain't possible now, Killist... I'm...a... goner...

FARMER dies. Maybe the wind whistles.

KILLIST: (*Frustrated.*) I keep doing that.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 2

Scene:

The Sheriff's office. A desk, a chair, a door, a window, and an empty jail cell.

At Rise:

SHERIFF STICK is behind his desk. Angry shouting can be heard through an open window. MISS EMILY barges in.

MISS EMILY: Sheriff, Sheriff! Come quick! The townspeople's awful grumpy!

SHERIFF: Now, now, Miss Emily, what in tarnation is going on?

MISS EMILY: Near's I can tell, Sheriff, they's sick of being thirsty!

SHERIFF: Well, this is Bone Dry, Arizona, and we all knew what we was in fer when we moved here.

MISS EMILY: No we didn't! There's hardly any water fit to drink for miles.

SHERIFF: I adjusted my bodily needs and expectations when I read the brochure. Why didn't everybody else?

MISS EMILY: The brochure? What brochure?

SHERIFF: (*Whips out brochure.*) This one. Sure is purty.

MISS EMILY: Let me see that. (*Snatches brochure and reads.*) "Please note that this town is very dry and you could die."

Nobody wants to move to a town and just die!

SHERIFF: This is the Old West. You die.

MISS EMILY: But what about the babies?

SHERIFF: That's all you women-folk care about—the babies! What **about** the babies??

MISS EMILY: They's dyin', too.

SHERIFF: Well have more!

MISS EMILY: But the men-folk is dyin' so there's nobody to have babies with!

SHERIFF: That's ridiculous! I went into the army for two years and when I got back my wife had a fine baby boy waiting for me!

MISS EMILY: I didn't know you had a young'un.

SHERIFF: He moved away. Said this town was too dry.

MISS EMILY: Where'd he move?

SHERIFF: Wet River.

MISS EMILY: I bet he loves it.

SHERIFF: He did. Till he drowned.

The angry shouting continues.

Those dyin' people better shut up or I'm gonna kill somebody.

Suddenly, gunshots are heard. Then screaming. Then more gunshots. Then less screaming. Finally, the last screamer is silenced by a final gunshot. Everyone must be dead.

Did I do that?

KILLIST: *(From off stage.)* I'll ask again: where's the Sheriff?

A **TOWNSPERSON** *groans off stage.*

You! Get me the Sheriff!

TOWNSPERSON: *(Off stage; nearly dead.)* Sorry,
Killist...almost dead...

KILLIST: *(Off stage.)* The sheriff's dead? Did I shoot him?

TOWNSPERSON: *(Off stage, last breath.)* No...

KILLIST: *(Off stage.)* Then get 'im!

TOWNSPERSON: *(Off stage, gasps.)* Can't... Too dead...
(Dies.)

KILLIST: *(Off stage.)* I did it again!

MISS EMILY: *(Whispers.)* Sheriff! Somebody's shooting!

SHERIFF: *(Whispers.)* Wasn't me.

MISS EMILY: *(Whispers.)* No, the shots came from outside.

SHERIFF: *(Whispers.)* Be a good girl, Miss Emily, and have a
peek out the window.

MISS EMILY: *(Whispers.)* Is it safe?

SHERIFF: *(Whispers.)* I don't know. Check and see.

MISS EMILY: *(Shouts out window.)* Hey! Did you just kill all
them people?

KILLIST: *(Off stage; proudly.)* Yes ma'am!

MISS EMILY: *(To SHERIFF.)* It's him.

SHERIFF: Maybe he's just passing through.

KILLIST: *(Off stage.)* Come on out here, Sheriff! I just killed your
town!

SHERIFF: No—you come in! *(Whispers.)* Now Miss Emily I'll

open the jail cell and you shove him right in!

MISS EMILY: 'Tain't ladylike to shove, Sheriff.

THE KILLIST enters, gun drawn.

SHERIFF: Who do you think you are killing all those people? I liked some of 'em!

KILLIST: I am The Killist, I kill.

SHERIFF: Good enough for me. Please enjoy your stay.

MISS EMILY: Sheriff!

SHERIFF: He said it's his *job*, Miss Emily! I ain't one to interfere with a man's livelihood.

KILLIST: Why do you call this "Bone Dry, Arizona"?

SHERIFF: Because it's in Arizona.

KILLIST: But why "Bone Dry"?

SHERIFF: Never thought about it.

KILLIST: Sheriff, round up the rest of the town and have them assemble here in five minutes.

MISS EMILY: They're all dead.

KILLIST: The desert can be cruel, it's true.

MISS EMILY: Not the desert—you killed them!

SHERIFF: It seems the entire population of Bone Dry is now standin' in this room.

KILLIST: You mean there's no one left to kill?

SHERIFF: Just the Indian. But he only comes into town when it rains.

KILLIST: So I don't have to worry about him.

MISS EMILY: (*Proudly.*) He's a medicine man.

KILLIST: What's he going to do, heal me to death?

SHERIFF: They say he can control the weather.

MISS EMILY: It's true. I've seen him do it.

KILLIST: What do they call him?

MISS EMILY: Chief Rain-Snow.

KILLIST: So where was he when everyone was dying of dryness?

SHERIFF: He's got an exclusive contract with Oregon. But we've got him doing us some wind on the side.

MISS EMILY: Did you notice our fine wind?

KILLIST: Notice it? I was choking on it! Why don't you get him to stop?

SHERIFF: Stop the wind?

MISS EMILY: The wind is his gift to us.

SHERIFF: Wouldn't be right refusin' a gift.

KILLIST: Can he do anything else besides control the weather?

SHERIFF: I once saw him end a man's life with just three words!

KILLIST: What were the words?

SHERIFF: "Tribe, kill him."

KILLIST: Uh-oh—a politician. Perhaps I should move on. Where could I get a horse?

MISS EMILY: Where's the one you rode in on?

KILLIST: I shot him.

MISS EMILY: Right—that's your vocation.

KILLIST: It wasn't business-related. He had a broken leg.

SHERIFF: Then let's go see the Horse King, if he's still alive.

KILLIST: I told you. I shot him. He's dead.

SHERIFF: You killed Dick Stallion?

KILLIST: I killed the horse, King.

MISS EMILY: How could you?? We all loved him!

KILLIST: He was *my* horse, King was.

MISS EMILY: He was *everybody's* Horse King!

SHERIFF: How'd he break his leg?

KILLIST: Dick Stallion or the horse, King?

SHERIFF: Dick Stallion *is* the Horse King.

KILLIST: *My* horse was named "King". Whatever unsanctified relationship you people have with that stallion is your affair.

SHERIFF: Well, the horse lot's full of horses just waitin' for a name. Follow me.

As they start to exit, MAW and PAW mope in as though marching in a funeral procession.

SHERIFF: Look! There's Maw and **PAW:**

KILLIST: Two more I missed. (*Aims his gun at the newcomers.*)

MISS EMILY: What are you doing??

KILLIST: Killing them.

MISS EMILY: No, you're not!

KILLIST: But I'm The Killist.

MISS EMILY: They're just a couple of innocent pioneers trying to feed their family. (*To MAW and PAW.*) Hey, Maw. Hey, Paw.

MAW: (*Droopy, if not suicidal.*) Hey.

BY EMMETT LOVERDE

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