

Homicide: The Game

Presents

Painseeker

"Kyle Crystallized"
by Laura Douglass

I am aware that it is Lance's wish to maintain this site as a living memorial to Raychel. I understand that Raychel's murder was painful for him. It was painful for me, too. But this crime was committed almost seven months ago and we still haven't seen a single person charged with her murder. To me, that is even more painful. In my opinion, Raychel's memory cannot be truly celebrated until the person responsible for that crime has been found, charged, and convicted. And any attempt to celebrate Raychel's life which omits or avoids her unsolved murder trivializes Raychel's memory. I won't stand for it. But what really makes it hard to bear is that I know who was responsible for Raychel's murder. It is too obvious to ignore.

If you remember from my previous article, "Kyle vs. The World", I stated:

"Yes, he (Kyle McAllister) was capable of inflicting violence, and in the future I will give you examples of his violent background. I won't be responsible for throwing out unsubstantiated rumors, so I will hold back on these facts for the future."

Kyle McAllister, welcome to the future! And my judgment: Kyle McAllister killed Raychel.

This judgment is based on simple facts, which Lance has already stated in "That Day." First, Raychel was murdered in Kyle McAllister's apartment. Second, Kyle McAllister made the call to the police over 90 minutes after Raychel's murder. This is important when you remember that the police believe that the killer may have attempted to move the body, but stopped. Third, there was apparently no sign of forced entry to the apartment, so whoever killed Raychel was either invited in or already lived there.

Those facts make Kyle McAllister without question, the prime suspect. However, the truly damning evidence is Kyle McAllister himself. If you ever had the chance to know him as I do, you would understand immediately. He is a very dangerous man who is prone to violence.

I expect that my opinion at this point may not be very persuasive to you. I'll freely admit that I am not an objective voice in this matter. I have had several run-ins with Kyle, and we have often had disagreements in the past. So I would not blame you for being skeptical of my conclusions regarding Kyle McAllister or his involvement in Raychel's murder.

At least not at first.

I would like to devote the remainder of this article to a single episode in my dealings with Kyle. I feel that this specific moment in time truly crystallizes Kyle McAllister as a person. What's more, the events of this episode are beyond dispute – even from Kyle himself. I expect that once you read this, you will trust my judgment of him.

We were at my bar, Safehaven, at around 10:15 PM on March 6, 1999. The weekly meeting of The Bleeders was in the midst of its climax, which means that Raychel was on stage, reading from a notebook. I was running the show from the corner booth, scheduling the performances and introducing them. Lance was with me in the booth, as he, Raychel, and I usually occupied it during meetings. All of the regulars were in the house, so we had a good fifty or sixty members in the bar. That was when Kyle McAllister came in.

From the moment he came in I knew something was wrong with him. As he walked across the room and sat down at a table away from the others, I could see that he was not fit for human companionship. If you could see bad intentions, there they were. At the time, Kyle had recently ended a relationship with another one of our female poets, Karen Kowalczyk, so I had inaccurately assumed that it was bothering him. Regardless, I went to him to see if there was anything I could do for him since Kyle and I were still on friendly terms back then.

I sat down at his table and tried to open him up a little, even though he wouldn't even make eye contact with me. He just kept staring at Raychel up on the stage. I asked him about Karen, but he evaded the subject. I tried a couple of other subjects to no avail. Suddenly, he turned on me, flashed his dark glare at me and told me to go make a pain in the ass of myself somewhere else. Shocked, I excused myself and quickly went back to the corner booth and told Lance what had happened. He noted my concern and stated that he didn't like the look in Kyle's eye as he stared at Raychel. We agreed that we would keep Kyle away from Raychel for the evening.

Raychel's reading ended a few minutes later and the typical shuffling of people around the room commenced. I busied myself with finding the next act on the schedule and preparing to introduce him while Lance ran interference for me, heading several people off as they came forward. I performed my usual duties and was onstage about to announce the next act when I noticed something.

Kyle wasn't sitting at his table.

I glanced around the room quickly, but to little avail as the lights onstage only allow the person onstage to see the tables closest to the stage. I wondered into the microphone, "Has anyone seen Kyle?"

A few hands pointed back to the bar. Concerned, I hurriedly introduced the next act and made a beeline for the bar. Sure enough, Kyle was in the midst of a swarm around Raychel at the bar. A couple of writers were trying to buy Raychel a drink and draw her into their conversation. Raychel, still glowing from her performance, entertained them, if only for the free booze. I tried to head off Kyle, who was on the outskirts of the swarm, but he must have noticed me and responded by thrusting himself through the pack and right beside Raychel. Not having much of a chance to get through them all (I'm not exactly an Amazon Queen) I turned and went to find Lance to intervene.

By the time I found Lance, who was still locked in conversation at the corner booth, something had happened back at the bar between Kyle and Raychel. From talking to one of the writers afterward, I heard that Kyle had been rebuffed by Raychel

and Kyle had responded with anger. Anger, as many people who knew Raychel, was the last way to address Raychel. She didn't back down to anyone, and this time she said something very pointed at Kyle. So much so that the pack around them slowly disbanded and gave the two space.

Before I knew it, Lance had flown past me and headed straight to the bar and in the face of Kyle. Lance tried to calm the situation and get Kyle to stand down and leave Safehaven. Kyle, however, had a different plan. Kyle turned to leave, but whirled around and punched Lance dead in the face. The force of the punch was so hard it knocked Lance to the floor. Unsatisfied, Kyle leaped on Lance and continued to beat him. Several people tried to separate him, but to little avail. Finally, Kyle got up and grabbed Raychel. She screamed and tried to fight him off, but Kyle was too strong for her. He pulled her to him and dragged her out the door with him.

We didn't see her or Kyle again for over three months. Lance filed a missing person's report on Raychel, but nothing came of it. The time was agonizing for us all. No one could find either of them. I contacted her brother, David, to let him know what had happened. He told me that if he heard from her, he would notify Lance or myself immediately. After a month, a toll had noticeably taken place among The Bleeders. Without our most important member, the group had been demoralized.

On June 19, 1999, over three months later, Kyle and Raychel walked back into Safehaven to absolute astonishment. Both were changed. Kyle was happier than I had ever seen him and Raychel was no longer officially a poet, she was a lyricist. She had stopped writing poetry and instead was concentrating on writing lyrics and singing songs by Kyle. They were convinced that they had a future together. By the end of the evening, many were convinced they were right. Some of us were less optimistic.

My disappointment in Raychel's new direction, from an artistic point of view, was that I felt she wasn't being true to herself. When she wrote poetry, Raychel was expressing herself, but as Kyle's singer and lyricist, she was playing a role that bore little resemblance to herself. Her new role as singer and songwriter was clearly intended to generate an audience, not send a message. It rang hollow for me.

This story is incontrovertible proof that Kyle McAllister is capable of murder. His violence against Lance along with his kidnapping and brainwashing of Raychel show how far Kyle will go to get his way. As I stated before, Kyle had several affairs with poets among The Bleeders as part of a personal audition process. He chose Raychel to be his partner, and nothing and no one was going to stand in his way. I believe that this pattern of behavior, if drawn forward, proves that he is capable of committing murder, and cold enough to conceal it properly.

I hope that this helps to put this matter to rest. To respect Lance's wish, I expect that I will address other issues surrounding Raychel's life in the future. Perhaps I will concern myself with the first time I met her or comment about her poetry. Perhaps I will write about how Raychel became the centerpiece of The Bleeders and why we often referred to her as The Bleeding Jewel.