

How Ryan Got 300 Back by Ben Orthey

“Can you look up the receipt by my phone number?” Ryan bit his lip and toyed absently with a crumpled slip of paper in his pocket. “215-839-1057.”

The kid behind the counter sighed and withdrew his hand from a bag of party size cool ranch. He wiped his fingers on his chest just above a bright blue BULLSEYE branded nametag. ‘Dugg,’ with two Gs. D-U-double G. Christ. Dugg began tapping at his keypad and Ryan repeated his number. Somewhere between inputting the number and reading the results, Dugg found his moment to sneak a doritos. He crunched as he shook his head. “Card?”

“What?”

“Do. Ya. Have. The. Card.” Dugg nudged the card reader toward him. “Ya made the original purchase on?”

Ryan produced his wallet and swiped a card through the machine.

Dugg went for another cool ranch before consulting the monitor. “Nope, nothing there either.” Dugg shrugged out a labored sigh as if he’d been through this a hundred times today. “Without a receipt, we can exchange it for the current value, which is...” BEEP. “\$400.”

“\$400? But this suit was \$700 when I bought it last week.”

“Yeah. Went on sale. Like a discount? Something we do pretty regularly here. Few weeks ago we ran these in our flash sale rack. Had ‘em going for \$100 apiece.”

Ryan clenched his jaw. “But it will come back off sale, right? Can’t I exchange it for the full price at least?”

“Sorry, but you have to trade for the current value. If you don’t have your receipt, we can’t know how much you paid for it.”

Ryan ran his fingers playfully over the slip of paper in his pocket and held back a smirk. “Then how can you know I didn’t buy this on the flash sale, a few weeks ago?”

Dugg slowed in his tracks. “I suppose we can’t.” He scratched his head. “I’m sorry, sir, I don’t really decide the rules here. But if you want to exchange this suit I’d be happy to authorize an exchange for up to \$400 worth of merchandise.”

Of course he would. The rules had been the same for a long time here at BULLSEYE, and they were ironclad. Ryan had been nailed by them before, but not today. Today he was nailing the BULLSEYE right back. “Can you point me in the direction of the flash sale rack?”

10 Things I Hate About Wizard Pride by Micah Kinard

“Here we are, kid. Now hand me that spyglass.”

Rota unclasped the long tube and slapped it in Quin's awaiting palm.

"A parade. Hah! Of course..."

Rota couldn't see anything, the black grease she'd smeared across her face was starting to burn as sweat channeled rivulets of the stuff into her squinting eyes.

"What do you see?" She asked, trying to wipe her face with her glove.

"Ugghh...disgusting...Just...so...ugghh."

He offered the scope over his shoulder, "For prime examples of number's 8-6, look no further than what's coming up the road."

Having zero success with her now grease-slicked gloves, collar, and sleeve, Rota resorted to pawing the black smear with bare fingers.

It had seemed like a good idea in her room, I mean, that's what you did when prepping one's self for a night of espionage, right? She didn't actually know, of course, this being her first ever such night.

Upon clearing one eye she noticed Quin's expectation, she reached, the precious tool quickly slipping from her greasy grasp.

"Shit!" she yelled as it bounced over the roof ledge.

Quin snapped 'round,

"Wha...ahhh..." quickly piecing together the paralyzed wince of his now-one-eyed Rota with the absence of his beloved instrument.

He sucked his teeth, "you dropped it..."

"I...it slipped, I couldn't see" Rota stammered.

Quin realized her disarray, "What the hell happened to you?"

"It's grease, I...I thought it'd be... stealthy" her tears rewetting the gunk and blinding her again.

She slouched down the parapet, head hung in blind defeat.

"Aww, hey" Quin lightened, knowing well the uselessness of a pouty Rota, "You look..." he looked her over; one gloved hand, grease everywhere, crying, oblivious to the puddle she'd plopped down in, "...really stealthy, like a... I think you just used too much."

"Yeaaa, I think youre right" Rota sniffled, eyes closed tight.

Quin took a knee returning to his disdain,

"Fuck'n sparks... it's bad enough they exist, kid... basically immortal, magic little fingers muck'n up our politics, our supply chains, and now the king decrees Wizard Pride Month..."

"#3 on the list." Rota proudly interjected, blindly washing her fingers in the puddle about her.

“Yup, #3... hell, maybe even higher... all so we can gas up their ancient egos even more.”

“It’s bullshit.” Rota agreed, back to pawing at her eyes.

“Damn right it is...” Quin glanced toward the parade, “that’s why it ends tonight, once and for all.”

10 Things I Hate About the Wizard of Pride by @annahamiltonwriter

All the others I can bear. The Wizards of Lust, of Gluttony, of Sloth—the Wizards of Envy and Greed—even the Wizard of Wrath, I can abide. But never the Wizard of Pride. He is the wickedest of them all, as, surely, Pride is the deadliest of those seven sins, for it is the one that births the daring to commit all the others.

You may think me a petty smatchet for holding such a grudge. No, I assure you, this Wizard is truly hateful, and to make manifest the rationality of my hate, I offer ten reasons, as follows:

1. He assassinated our good king Jondalar with that wicked poison of his which is his sign and seal.
2. After the foul murder of King Jondalar, he set himself up as ruler in his stead. Usurper!
3. Whereupon, he sent out the other Wizards to ravage our land. The Wizard of Gluttony stole our food, the Wizard of Greed sacked our towns, and the Wizard of Lust bore off our fairest maidens. These wizards I hate for their wicked deeds, but not so much as him that commanded them.
4. The cur is not even human. He was once a man, but, they say, infused with the blood of a powerful demon he became something else entirely.
5. To wit: his eyes are black and blank as obsidian. His face is a white mask. And he commands powers unnatural to man.
6. He used his evil magic to blacken the face of the sun and deprive the land of light, all because, in his own words, “I can.”
7. He then demanded that the terrified people bow at his feet and worship him as a god. Blasphemy!
8. When I refused to bow, and cursed him for his wicked daring, he blasted me with magic from his staff, racking me with unbearable pain. I still remember it to this day.
9. And for no other reason than my righteous defiance, he bound me in his darkest, dankest prison cell and subjected me to daily tortures.
10. He has condemned me to be executed tomorrow. The candle burns low, the morning is almost here. I commend this letter to you, dear reader, so you will know why I so hate the Wizard of Pride, and so that perhaps, one day, you shall avenge me.