

Ink-Jet Pen Justice

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It was just like any normal day at the old Ink-jet kiosk in Cambridge, my day started off like any other, nice and quiet with no problems, that should have been a sign right there on its own, but I was too excited I guess to have seen it. But then that one customer, you know the type I'm talking about, the one that demands all your attention and for a long period of time. No, no, he or she isn't buying anything, they just want answers, answers that cannot be answered, questions that not even the smartest man on the planet could solve; the person that wants everything and is willing to pay nothing for it. Meanwhile other paying customers linger in the background, losing their patience with the hold up, the naïve, brain-dead bullshit that is unfolding before them, but do they want to interrupt, no, who would, then they, would be under the massive pressure to answer what cannot be answered.

"Do you refill Ink here?" Was the last customer in-line's question, do you walk into a restaurant and ask them if they serve food, stroll into a dentist's office and say "Hey, do you fix teeth here?" No, of course not, those are redundant but more importantly dumb questions to ask in those cases, well, if you think about it, Ink-jet refill service doesn't mean two for one hotdogs. But that's neither here nor there, back to the crime about to par-take.

"Yes we do" was my response, although as mean as I think, you must keep your composure when dealing with the public, he handed me his cartridges, I asked for his number, just for our records not like we ever plan on calling him, he waved his hand and replied, "You don't need my information." Who does this guy think he is, some Master Jedi with force powers? Sorry bud, you don't have any mind powers, but we don't need your info so I just played along, "Ok, no problem." I finished typing it in, the worksheet printed out, I handed him my one and only pen and asked him to sign the bottom. "What is this I'm signing, some hidden clause?" Yeah, some hidden clause, stating that if you do not return here within the designated time, your cartridge as you know it will self destruct and destroy humanity. Do you see fine print, no, it's all legible, and it pretty much says, these cartridges aren't meant to be refilled and that Ink-jet isn't responsible for damaged or incorrectly installed mishaps.

After incoherently scribbling his name down, I explained it would take roughly twenty minutes to complete the process. After acknowledging with a slight nod of the head, he began to wander off further into the mall. Something was peculiar; I could sense it in the air, looking down only to discover the pen he had signed his name with was now missing. Out of the corner of my keen eye, I saw him twirling the object in question in his right hand.

"Excuse me sir, that pen belongs here." I politely stated, because they say, being nice gets you treated nicely back, yeah right, whoever said that should have received a kicked to the nuts right after. He was about ten feet away by this point; he turned and gave me that deviant smile as he responded "I guess not anymore" then completing his three-sixty turn and continued on his way whistling a cheery tune.

Ok, it wasn't your normal ball point clear cheap plastic, run of the mill pen, it was your average, solid blue plastic clicky pen and damn-it, it was property of Ink-jet and by God; it shall remain that way. I hopped over the counter, as I was in mid-air, grabbed a hold of the, be back in ten minute sign and as I landed, I set it down on the counter.

"Sir, I must protest, that pen is Ink-jet's." The pen crook turned and a puzzled expression hit his face as he then made haste with his movement. I quickened my footing as I began my chase for justice. As I turned the corner to get a view of the whereabouts of that pen, the man holding it was nowhere to be seen which could only lead to two options, A, he is, in fact, a Master Jedi and made a miraculous escape or B, he ran into one of the nearby stores. Since this is real life, I chose B, and proceeded to the bookstore. What a cocky bastard, thinking I would just assume he kept running, there he was, back turned to me pretending to be looking at the books on the shelf, so, now I had him, I snuck up right behind him and cried out, "give me back that pen!" As I tackled the unaware man and we both landed in the shelf, knocking it and every book on it all over the floor, people around gathered to see me jump back to my feet and give this crook a few kicks right into the rib cage. Justice prevailed.

After satisfying my anger needs I hoisted the man to his feet, an embarrassing feel shivered up my spine, this wasn't the man with my pen, was an honest mistake, anyone in my position would have made it, maybe he is a Jedi and is tricking my mind.

Commotion among the crowd began, I overheard the words police and call, yes, in fact do get them here, but not for me but for that felon still on the loose with Ink jet's pen. I saw that vindictive villain just on the other side of the crowd, he held up the pen, smiled and proceeded down the hall. Ok, now gloating, that just irritates me more than some old lady paying in pennies at the grocery store, now I mean business.

I tossed the innocent man in my grasps to the side and leapt forth onto the nearby stand and jumped over the crowd and made it outside of the store just in time to see that lawbreaker bolting down the hallway and into the CD store. "I have you now." I shouted in a deep tone and made my way there, wasting no more time.

I've already been gone five out of my ten minutes I said I'd be back, but crime doesn't have boundaries and it doesn't pay. There was no way this hoodlum was going to get away with was not his, I had a duty to fulfill, and that duty, was to retrieve that pen and retrieve I will, failure was not an option.

I had now entered the CD store, man, so many patrons in here and it was kind of dark, making it a tad difficult to see the target, but that's what he wanted and I refuse to give him that satisfaction, I will seek him out, where is man tracker when you need him? Ha, I looked to the left to see a employee lifting up a knocked over display sign, only a man in a hurry would have knocked that sign over, meaning my target went to that side, but maybe that's what he wants me to believe and he actually went the other way, hmm, with the criminal mind, anything is possible, so expect the unexpected.

Decisions, decisions, which way to go, this was a catch twenty two, no matter the way I went, he was ready to make an escape on the other side. I looked at the disgruntled employee, "hey, did you see where the guy that knocked that over went." I was hoping this kid was pissed off enough to reveal to me the location of the ballpoint bandit.

He pointed towards the back and replied, "He ducked down over by the country section." Finally, results, I would never had thought to look where no one in their right minds would be in, the country section, I nodded and gave the kid that look, the, everything will be ok now justice is here, look, he knew the look, he wanted revenge, I mean justice as well. "Ok, if he manages to get this way, trip him to buy me some time, got it?" He nodded telling me that he understood his role here.

I dashed down the DVD alley, circling around so maybe the offender wouldn't notice my approach and so far so good. I crept up nice and close in hopes to make a dramatic leap. As I came to a landing, I noticed he was not in the country section, but now making a haste escape out of the store. Good thing I had my trusty deputy waiting to deploy a trap for him. I grabbed a few CD cases and tossed them at my target, hoping to knock him off guard, one did in fact hit him in the head, he glanced back to give me a glare just as my deputy pushed the display case over and in the way of the runaway man as I regained some lost ground between us.

The man had the reflexes of a goddamn cat as he floated over the falling case and landed perfectly on his feet and kept on fleeing. Sadly I wasn't so lucky, I too, tried to make an unbelievable jump over the box, but it wasn't high enough. My right foot got caught behind the case and I went head-over-heels and landed hard on the floor just outside of the store. I sat up rubbing my head as my deputy made sure I was alright and just as I took a look to see where this man was, knowing full well he had to be long gone. But there he was, standing about thirty feet away holding the pen high into the air as he had a sinister laugh from my misfortune, "better luck next time sucker." He yelled after his laugh as he, without looking, began to run off, but, just as a little old lady with a shopping cart was behind him, he crashed into the cart, rolled over it and fell flat on the ground with the cart and all of the ladies bought goods inside of it, on top of him.

Now was my only chance, I jumped to my feet and ran like the wind over just as the outlaw was getting up, I lunged towards him, made a connection and we both landed and rolled along the ground, people scattered in terror when they saw this brawl take place. I quickly got up, with the adrenaline pumping now; pain wasn't an option, just results, as I punched the man in the face, sat on his chest and ensued righteousness onto his face one solid punch (the hammer of justice) at a time.

"Where is it?!" I cried out, I didn't want to hit him anymore, my hands were getting sore, just then, a person over in the peanut gallery asked, "What did this man do?" was probably the question on everyone's mind so I decided to bring them all up to speed. "This criminal stole property from my place of work." The bleeding terrified man, prone on the ground cried out, "It was just a pen!"

Everyone was whispering, pen, huh, why the, were some of the spoken words of the crowd, one replied, "All this over a pen, a bit extreme don't you think?" Justice has no limits, no minimum requirements, no fine line, he broke it and that's all that matters. I threw one last punch, to gratify my anger bugs needs as I slowly got up to retort, "This isn't about what is what, but the principal behind it. This man stole something that didn't belong to him and he needed to be taught a lesson." I placed my foot on top of his chest so he couldn't get to his feet and I asked for one last time, "where is that pen? No more games."

He frantically searched through his pocket, where he knew he had placed the pen, but it was empty, he checked it again and every other possible spot on his person with no results, he eventually confessed "I don't have it anymore." Stuttering every word, he must have meant it, but where could he have dropped it, then a quick flashback, him rolling over the cart, the pen falling from his inside pocket and into the old lady's bag, that had to have been the new resting place for my pen, it just had to have been. I looked back, during our struggle, a few guys had helped the old lady with her cart and items and she fled the scene, I just knew deep down she knew exactly what she received and left to claim victory.

But not from me, not this day, I will get that pen back even if it runs out of ink by then. After twenty minutes of asking and searching I managed to track the old lady to Zellers, I spotted her at the cash register making a purchase, she paid with her credit card and wouldn't you know it, she was signing the paper with Ink-jets pen. Well, that's just the icing on the cake I needed to take this broad down. I hid around the corner and just as she was pushing her cart out, I leapt over the cart, I was hoping to scare the old lady and take her purse during her moment in terror, instead, she grabbed her bag right before I and as I landed, she whacked me over the head a few times with it dazing me for a few seconds. Then out of nowhere she pulled out her stun gun, well, I moved to the side to dodge that attack, grabbed her gun hand, twisted it around and made her stun herself. As she convulsed on the ground from the sudden shock to her system, I swiftly searched through her purse for that pen, nowhere inside, what did she do with it?

I took the time to look around, maybe it fell out during the beating she dished out and just as I turned to face Zellers, I saw the cashier hand my pen to another customer so they could sign their name for the credit recipe. Well, enough is enough; I'm not taking any more chances. I am getting this pen back now. I walked over to the back of the line; I figured this would be a lot easier than running up, cutting someone off and looking like a maniac. There were three patrons ahead of me, the first one, paid in cash, good, that means that she never came in contact with the pen and has no reason to pick it up and accidentally walk out with it. The second customers turn, the cashier rings her products through she reaches into her purse and pulls out some cash, lucky for her, because she wouldn't want to have dealt with me and like before, she too has absolutely no reason to pick up the pen and take it with her. Now for the third and final customer, products go through, she reached into her purse, pulled out cash, nice, and that pen is defiantly not going anywhere now. "Oh, dear, I don't have enough cash; guess I'll have to charge it onto my card." The little old bat said there was innocence in her tone, but I knew her devious plan, get her mitts on that pen and claim victory.

The cashier swiped her card, the temptation flowed through my blood to just kick this old lady out of my way and grab hold of that pen, she then handed the pen to the old bird, she proceeded to scribble down her signature and that was when I snapped, I couldn't wait to see the fate of the pen any further, I body checked the old victim off her feet, as she fell, I grabbed a hold of the pen, snatched it out of her old brittle fingers and leapt over her body and ran out of the store while laughing out of joy the whole way, there were tears of relieve falling from my eyes.

I managed to return to my booth unnoticed and placed the, be back in ten minutes, sign away, dusted off my pants and shirt, took a deep breath and regained my composure, there, now no one would expect it was me the whole time. I looked at the pen, it was the same one alright finally, it was now back where it properly belongs, I placed it in it's spot just as a customer approached my booth, perfect timing.

"Can I get these two refilled please?" She politely asked, no deceitful tone, no alterative motive at first glance so I replied, "Sure no problem." Took her information down, no problem, very cooperative, ripped the worksheet, asked her to sign it, she grabbed a hold of that pen, I kept a very watchful eye on it, made sure it wasn't going anywhere, then, a loud shout "hey." Someone recognized another person, but it was loud enough to take my eyes off of that pen for a few seconds, the lady handed me the worksheet after signing and smiled, said thank you, see you in twenty and slowly walked off.

I took the cartridges and worksheet turned around just as I caught a glimpse of that old witch stuffing that pen into her purse, some nerve. "Uh, excuse me madam, I believe that pen is mine." And just as I was about to hop the counter, she turned back, looked at the pen and smiled, "Oh, you're right, so sorry." She then handed it back to me, see, there are good people in the world after all.

"No problem." I smiled back and she left, I set the pen down, as it rested on the counter, it was then I realized, this pen was light blue, my pen was dark blue, I tested the ink on a sticky pad and wouldn't you believe, it was out of ink, that witch switched pens, she gave me her old dried out one and took my filled one. She knew this all along; it was her plan from the start, what kind of sick bitch switches her empty pen for another and with her innocent apology and smile, knowing full well she just fucked me right in the ass and gave no reach around what so ever! Although a reach around from her would probably be worse than getting my pen back. Justice was long gone and so was she.

After the fact, about an hour later, I finally gave in and bought a new pen, but not in a vulnerable place, no, no, this pen is in one of those metal casing and it safely rests on the counter, with a big metal chain welded to it and bolted to the counter so it can never be taken again...

The End