

# DWARF IN TIGHTS: (FAILED) HARBINGER OF DOOM

A TEN-MINUTE MONOLOGUE

By Bradley Walton

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***AT RISE: The NARRATOR, a male or female teenager, on a bare stage.***

It's 7:15 in the morning, and the day's off to a bad start. I missed the bus and now I'm having to walk to school. About a mile down the road, this little, fat, bearded guy dressed in an outfit that looks an awful lot like tights and a dress comes waddling out from behind a dumpster and blocks the sidewalk. He looks like a dwarf from some children's book with ugly pictures.

"Princess!" (or "prince!") he shouts in a voice that sounds like an Ewok crossed with a garbage disposal.

I don't have time for this. I walk around him and keep going. But then somehow he's standing right in front of me again, and I almost fall over him.

"Princess, you must come and aid your kingdom in its hour of greatest need!"

His voice is even more annoying now that he's speaking in full sentences.

"Get out of my way," I say. "I'm gonna be late for school."

"Without your aid," he says, "darkness will fall across *all* the realms! There will be no school left to go to."

Even though it goes against my better judgment, I have to stop and consider this. I have a geometry test tomorrow, so "no school left to go to" doesn't sound like such a bad thing.

"What kind of time frame are we looking at?"

"It is only a matter of days. A week at most!"

This does me no good whatsoever. So I just shove past the little dude and go on my way.

I figure that if the dwarf manages to pop up in front of me again, I'm gonna kick him in the face. Because if I'm late for school, I'm gonna get lunch detention.

I actually kinda wish he did pop up in front of me again, because that I would've been ready for. The dragon... the dragon I am not ready for.

Because wouldn't you know it, of course, there's a dragon. Out of nowhere. Blocking the sidewalk. And the road. And the entrance to the Yummy Burger. Which really ticks me off, because if I had more time, I'd get a 99-cent egg sandwich for breakfast. I don't have time, so it's a moot point, but it really irritates me that the option has been taken away.

And of course, the dwarf, who for some reason is now standing beside of me, just starts screaming and freaking out.

"He's here already! It's too late!"

It dawns on me that at this point, there's no way I can possibly make it to school on time. There's no good reason I shouldn't get myself an egg sandwich, except that there's a stupid dragon in my way. And now I find out that this dwarf who's been bothering me screwed up the time frame of the thing he was bothering me about. Admittedly, this might mean I'm off the hook on the geometry test, but still, if the dwarf doesn't know what he's talking about, that's just rude.

"What's the matter with you?" I yell at him. "Can't you properly estimate a time frame like a decent harbinger of doom? How am I supposed to make plans?"

The dwarf looks up at me with his big ugly dwarf eyes and I swear, he looks like he's gonna cry. I'm terrified he might drip snot onto my new shoes, because his nose is enormous, but then I notice that his fingertips are crackling with electricity and I'm thinking that he's built up some kind of static charge with those ugly tights and he'd better not touch me, and then all of a sudden he jumps into the air over my head and he's yelling, "Defend the princess!"

Naturally, I'm worried that he's going to drip dwarf snot into my hair so I cover my head with my arms and then there's this splat noise right next to me. I look up and yell, "Hah! Missed me!" and I see that the air is filled with flying things. Like winged horses and lions with eagle heads

and giant birds and stuff. And some of the winged horses have people in armor sitting on them. I look at all the animals and I'm gripped by this sudden fear that the thing that went splat right next to me wasn't dwarf snot, because these things in the air... they're animals. And none of them are wearing pants or diapers or anything. So I look at the ground beside me, and the thing that went splat turns out to have been this little fairy, which is a huge relief because I'd hate to think I almost got splattered with Pegasus poop. Of course, that's still a possibility because there's flying animals all over the place and I don't have an umbrella.

Fortunately, the dragon spreads a giant pair of wings and launches himself into the air and starts breathing fire and killing everybody, so I can finally get to the Yummy Burger. It's hard to get in because a bunch of people are standing around the door and the windows, gawking at what's going on outside. After I finally push my way through, I go up to the counter, but there's nobody there. All the employees are over by the door. I figure, okay. Gonna be late for school anyway. Might as well be patient. So like, fifteen seconds go by—I time it on the clock—and nobody acknowledges me. I yell, "Hel-oo! Customer here!" Nobody looks at me. I yell a second time, "Are you in business to serve food, or stare out the window at dragons?" Somebody—I think maybe it's the manager—looks at me like he's never seen a customer before and then turns right back to the window. I have half a mind to just leave, but I'm getting kind of hungry, so I walk around behind the counter, grab an egg sandwich out of one of the little chutes and put a dollar on the counter. The restaurant can pay the meal tax out of the employees' wages for all I care.

I go out the side door of the restaurant. The dragon and what's left of the flying critters are still going at it. It's pretty loud now that I'm back outside again. The dwarf is floating in the air and shooting electricity out of his fingers at the dragon, and I'm thinking, wow, those are some seriously static-y tights.

My egg sandwich is cold. Figures.

I head down the sidewalk in the direction of school. All of a sudden, something leaps over me from behind and lands on the sidewalk in front of me. It's one of those half-human, half-horse things. He's holding a really big club.

"Climb on my back," he says. "I'll take you to safety."

I see an opportunity to make up for lost time. I just might beat the tardy bell after all.

I climb up on the thing's back, which is hard because there's no saddle. But I finally get situated and say, "There's a really safe place about a mile up the road and two blocks left at the stop light."

The horse dude turns his head and looks at me funny.

"Wait a minute," he says. "You're not the princess."

Y'know how I said it was loud before? In the blink of an eye, everything goes silent. The battle cries. All the yelling. It just stops. It's weird.

Even weirder, everybody is looking at me.

"She's not—she's not—?" the dwarf stammers.

"I thought she didn't look right," says the dragon.

"But—but," says the dwarf, "you followed me—you attacked us!"

"Because I thought you knew your own princess!" bellows the dragon.

"I haven't seen her in ten years," the dwarf says. "Cut me some slack!"

The dwarf has floated down by the horse dude and is staring at me in disbelief.

"Why didn't you say anything?" asks the dwarf.

"About what?" I say.

"That you're not the princess."

"Duh," I say. "I thought that would've been obvious."

The horse dude looks at the dwarf. The dwarf looks at the horse dude. They both look at all the bodies lying on the street and stuff. The horse dude whacks the dwarf in the head with his club, and that looks to be the end of the dwarf.

“So sorry,” says the dragon. “If I’d known you weren’t the princess, I wouldn’t have attacked this realm until at least next week.”

“Yes,” says the horse dude. “Sorry about the confusion. The dwarf was kind of an idiot.”

“Don’t worry about it,” I say. “I mean, it’s a pain. But stuff happens. I’ll deal with it.”

“Very kind of you,” says the horse dude.

The dragon nods his head graciously and flies away.

“So,” I say to the horse dude, “since I’m already on your back and stuff, how about a ride to school?”

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