



Bully Battle Cry

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FLYMF August 2006, The Urinary Executive Theory Issue, Volume 3 Issue 8

Ah, the memories of childhood. For me, the sweetest recollections are the ones in which I was torturing my brother. I was shy, and it was hard for me to make friends before organized sports started. Having a younger brother was a perfect outlet for my rage—rage over being the oldest and being expected to behave, rage over having a sibling...it's a timeless story, really.

I had several blissful years as the judge, jury and executioner, and I couldn't seem to help myself, regardless of the punishment doled out by my mother, or as I liked to think of her, my brother's personal protector. She didn't know this protection only served as fuel for my desire to inflict pain.

Now, don't get me wrong—I didn't torture animals or “keep to myself a lot.” I failed to fit the profile of the classic serial killer, which made it harder to catch me. I just liked being a bully. I was big for my age and angry a lot. It would have been irresponsible to NOT bully at least one person.

My point is that as long as there have been big dumb kids, there have been bullies. Bullies are often the ones in sporting events who get benched, foul out in the first quarter, or break someone else's bones just for the sheer joy of it. In high school, they're identified by their letter jackets, which they wear all the time, alternating with muscle shirts. They play their music loud and speed in school zones. Sometimes they swerve to hit animals, though they seldom actually do it. They live to intimidate.

Sadly, what happens to these people when they grow up is far more tragic. More often than not, they don't finish college. They don't become wealthy and successful. They're frequently spotted working at discount warehouses, automobile shops, or as attendants of some kind. This does little to quell their tendency to bully, especially when the successful kids they used to bully come to their places of business to order their services, generally with a smirk and a healthy dose of impatience. Payback is a bitch, after all.

Well, I'm tired of mediocrity, both as a reformed sibling bully and as an American. Our nation has a bit of a reputation as a bully, and as a result we're getting the snot beaten out of us by the “nerdy” countries. It's time to consider that brute force may not be cutting it anymore.

What's my solution for this? Well, I don't have one, really. Medication? I was just hoping this little pep talk I threw out would be enough to propel you bullies into action, and not with your fists. It's time to back up our idle threats with a deeper, more intelligent side. It's not enough to be the pallet-lifter at your job, wowing the co-workers with your dumb-as-an-ox strength. There are people who will do that same job for half the price or less! Crack a book, man!

There comes a time when one has to act, and bullies, that time is now. I'm taking submissions for the official bully battle cry. I'll handle the spell-check, you just get close enough for me to guess what word you meant.

Together, we can beat this rap. We can make bullies cool again. If anyone has a problem with that, I'll kick your ass.