

WRAP

Work It On Out: The Interview Suit

Fumbling with his gear, he fled to the end of the gravelly Degre footpath; for this was the end of the arduous years-long journey. He had made it out, at long last, out of the treacherous Gradknolls. Below, at his feet, the legendary chasms of Werk yawned, seemingly unspannable, impossible to cross....
— from *Jobland*, as yet unpublished

There are hundreds of unfinished *Jobland* adventure manuscripts stored in my closet. Although I dream of publishing, I dare not retrieve them from their murky lair.

For in the back of my closet dwells a creature. Damned with two arms, two tails and a 42-inch long cut, it's hot, scratchy, way too '91, and I've yet to find a tie that matches its plaidacity. The creature is my suit jacket, the woolly bully I don time and time again to journey across the city in search of a job. This is no ordinary jacket — it has somehow absorbed the "white lies" I've told while interviewing and has evolved into a wretched life of its own.

Becoming my utility belt, my magic lasso and my fortress of solitude, the jacket makes the proper first impressions and jettisons my true persona from the grave war room of the interview. As myself, I am not charming enough. I haven't enough experience. The coat knows this and makes all the right moves for me. It shakes hands or, rather, forces a sleeve upward to proffer the firm handshake that I, in my generational lack of *savoir-faire*, may have forgotten. It irritates my neck enough to prompt a grimace that, yes, well, sort of looks like a "can-do" grin to the working world.

Yes, I am the jacket's thrall, and, oh, the lies it makes me tell. "Yes, I can do that." Yes, yes, yes. Never say no. It is a coat of smarms now. I, the soon-to-be college grad, humbly bowing low to the employment lord, fall penitent at his feet as if to say, "I am sorry for having no experience."

Alas, the employment overlord cares not about my feeble excuses.

Indeed, with June bearing down on me like a dried-up pen on used carbon paper, the jacket is com-



Scott Magoon, *Northeastern News*, Northeastern U.

ing out to hang off my back like some symbiotic feeding ("BURP") off the thousands of "liberties" I take in describing my heady job qualifications.

Finding a job is a crusade, a pilgrimage, a religious rite of passage. It's the "First Holy Commuting" to adult life. Our futures depend on this first job — or so we're led to believe — just as four years ago we were led to believe that our (our parents') school of choice would make a huge dent in the 5 mph bumper on the subcompact of life. Not quite, but the accident seems to be approaching head-on; it slithers toward us in the serpentine shape of unemployment lines.

It seems strangely appropriate that the jacket of lies hanging in my closet keeps me from becoming who I want to be.

Those "full mettle" jackets we doff after the interview could be shredded along with those cheat sheets of a résumé. That would show them. Maybe then I could do what I've wanted to do all along — go into my closet, grab those boxes in the back and publish my adventures of *Jobland*.

■ Scott Magoon, *Northeastern News*, Northeastern U.

Poll Question

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