

Sunday, March 27, 2005  
Approx. 3:00 p.m.  
Partial transcript of interview

Ryan: Yeah, I lived out in Reston and uh, uh...No, it was very fun. It was my first job and it was the job that I loved the most.

Mary Kate: Out of all your jobs?

R: Out of all my jobs I enjoyed that more than anything (*MK giggles*), cause I could go out and I could exploooore. I did it for the **love of finding golf balls** (*MK giggles again*). And this is also of course between the ages of six and eight when you don't have any kind of *fear*, so things like  
Snakes

Ooor

Spiders

That make me scream like a little girl now, uh, didn't really, uh, uh, be scared of, uh, I wasn't really scared of 'em back then, um...

MK: Was this before your mom and dad divorced?

R: Uh, no, this was actually shortly after they divorced. I think they, they got divorced, when I, when we *first* moved into that townhouse, uh...

MK: Out in Reston?

R: And it was like within a couple of months, because I do remember him moving out  
Very

I *barely* remember, but I do remember.

And then we lived in that townhouse for another three years until the landlord hiked up the rent and then we had to move, which was unfortunate, because I *really* liked it in that neighborhood.

It was a fun neighborhood.

` \* \* \*

R: It was like one of those neighborhoods where you, you could go out and pick fucking *blackberries* and shit (*MK giggles*), no I'm *serious*, like there were blackberries, and like  
During the summer there were like *fireflies*, and stuff like that...

\* \* \*

R: You wanna know why? You wanna know what started all this?

**BERT**

Of Bert and Ernie...or maybe it was Ernie? one of those two guys

Had a bottle-cap collection (*MK laughs*), and I thought,

"Eh,

that's cool.

Suuure!"

So I started a bottle-cap collection. I had a bottle-cap collection and a coin collection. I still have that in storage. Had a stamp collection, also in storage.

\* \* \*

R: So, I mean,

So **of course** like going out and collection golf balls was the uh, uh, was a natural progression.

And, you know, it was a great, I mean, right behind our house there was like a

Creek

That led into a golf-course lake

\* \* \*

R: *Granted*, whenever I went on the golf course, technically it's  
"*TRESPASSING*"

MK: But you were a little kid?

R: Yeah, I know, it's a seven-year-old, I mean

Who's *really* going to seriously yell at a seven-year-old?

I mean, now that I'm *ol-der* I see the golf course's

Reasoning behind it?

Because if I got hit in the head with a golf ball

That's a **biiiiig** liability for them

So, so that's good.

\* \* \*

R: But, uh, no, I mean like literally  
 EV'RY  
 DAY  
 I would go  
 Out  
 Looking for golf balls. I would take one of those big, like, uh,  
 Paint buckets? Like, I'm talking like a  
*Drum.*

\* \* \*

R: I'd bring my **haul** in when it got  
 Dark.  
 Actually, I wouldn't go out *ev'ry* day, I'd just go out a *lot* of days. At least, like, three, four times a week.  
 And then I'd  
 Clean 'em on like Saturdays... ooor I'd clean 'em, uuuh, on Sunday.  
**Scrub** 'em with a **scrub** brush, um... and, uh, on Saturdays or Sundays  
 Like once a week, or ev'ry two weeks or so, I'd go take 'em up to this  
 Tee?  
 That was kinda near the lake and near where the path from our neighborhood, around the lake, too...  
 So I'd take 'em up to that  
**Course**  
 There and I'd use the bucket to sit on, and I'd have egg cartons  
 Uh... lined up and I'd just display the  
 Golf balls in the egg cartons  
 'Cause it's the *perfect* carrying case for 'em.  
 MK: M'hm.  
 R: So I'd have, like,  
**Eight** or ten egg cartons holding golf balls, and if they were like in perfect condition, I'd sell 'em for fifty  
 cents?  
 If they had any nicks or scratches or anything like that, I sell 'em for...  
 A quarter. And **also** often times on the greens you'll find  
 Tees and stuff like that, too, so I'd have a box of tees I would sell for, uh,  
 Like a nickel, or something like that.  
 And it was cool, and, you know, with the golfers comin' by, I mean it's like  
 It's like when you see little kids running lemonade stands  
 MK: Only Hilter's [our pet word for Hitler, or any Nazi-like people] gonna say no?  
 R: Yeah, I know, it's, it's, I mean some golfers didn't want any, and they, you know, just ignore me.  
 Other golfers would come up and look, and you know  
 It's a *lot* cheaper, than, to get 'em from me, than it is from the  
*Club* house.  
 MK: Yeah, yeah.  
 R: Uh, so I would do that and I'd make, like, twenny bucks a sitting  
 Or something like that...  
 MK: Wow!  
 R: Uh, uh, and this is like, you know, two or three hours  
 Which for a seven-year-old kid that's not bad *at all*.  
 Um, I remember once on a **particularly** good day I sold my entire stock. Like even the ones, like even the  
 ones that I found on  
*The way* to selling golf balls, that were still dirty?  
 Even those I sold, so...  
 That was impressive. I mean, it was *fun*. Uh, ev'ry once in a while I would get kicked off, uh,  
 The course by one of the grounds keepers?  
 Uh, 'cause again, I wasn't supposed to...  
 Uh, and then of course there was that *one* guy that I told you about, that, I mean, I mean  
 You *really* have to have no **soul** to do this,  
 But he came up and

I was like on the  
I think I was like on the eighth? hole or the ninth hole – somewhere in the middle [*cough*]  
Of the course, and, uh, the tee for it, and this guy was saying  
“Oh! Well there’s a guy over on the **first** hold sellin’ the golf balls for a **nickel** a pop!”  
I’m like  
“O.k....uh, mine are fifty cents for the *new* ones or a quarter”  
And I, and I **wouldn’t budge!** Because that’s *lame*,  
MK: Yeah!  
R: What I told him was, well, I’m pretty sure what I told him was basically the equivalent of, well,  
“You should go back and get ‘em from *that* guy, I can’t compete with those prices!”  
Um, something along those lines, but what a seven-year-old would say.  
But basically I didn’t *cave*, and I’m **proud** of myself for not caving, because, that would have been  
*Horse* shit.  
I mean, but seriously, dude,  
How cheap have you got to be to try to *con...*?  
MK: A seven year old!  
R: A *seven-year-old*.  
I mean, my *God*, that’s just, like, you’re already gettin the shit **cheaper** than you would at the club-house.  
I mean, that’s just *ruuude*.  
But, didn’t cave, so, I’m happy with that.  
And of course there was that, there was the **other** story that I told you, that, I mean, you know  
I guess *any* time,  
It doesn’t matter if it’s the golf course or what not,  
But any time you’re a **kid** and you’re walkin’ around alone, you’re a potential **target** for...  
*Anybody*.  
I mean, usually it’s *bullies*, like, older kids and stuff, like that...  
\* \* \*

R: The *scary* thing though was that **one** guy, that was, uh, uh, getting back to the golf ball collecting that I  
told you about before, where, you know, I’m on that one side of the lake,  
The **golf course** side of the lake.  
This guy on the other side the lake is like,  
“Hey, c’mere kid.”  
O.k.,  
No.  
That’s *no* way you approach *some* kid, man, that’s just *no* way you do that.  
So automatically it’s off-putting.  
He was like in his *early* twenties, had a *moustache*, uh,  
Just kind of...  
MK: Bad guys *always* have moustaches.  
R: Yeah, yeah. He was just kind of  
There was **something** that was just  
*Uneasy* about him.  
And when he started circling the lake to come *towards* me, that’s when I got one of the passing golfers  
Who, again, you can’t turn down a seven-year-old kid.  
Asked him if he could walk me  
*Home*.  
And of course he said “Sure,” and, you know, he was walkin’ in that direction anyway.  
So, when I start, when I got together with *that* guy, the **other** guy,  
Walked away.  
And the golfer didn’t walk me to my door, but he walked me close enough.  
He walked me to, like, the **creek** that was just was just like twenny yards from our house.  
Our back door. So. I got home and Erin [*his older sister*] was there. So we were inside and that was o.k.  
MK: Was your mom home yet?  
R: No, she wasn’t home yet, but when she was home we told her about it.  
That’s when she called the police and the police came out.  
And, apparently there was some guy who had

*Molested* some, uh,  
**Kids** who were my age, some **boys** who were my age, like two neighborhoods *over*,  
Or a *neighborhood* over, I don't know.  
I pointed him out in the picture line-up, and that was the *guy* that they were looking for,  
And I think they did **catch** him.  
Now, granted, they couldn't get him for anything that *I*...  
But I think the guy was, definitely had issues.  
MK: Well, you helped point him out.  
R: Well, yeah, yeah, it definitely points out the fact that it's still a *problem*.  
This guy's still on the prowl, so...  
I'm pretty sure they got him.

\* \* \*  
MK: Did you feel *scared* when the guy was, like, "Hey, c'mere kid?" or...  
R: Well, I was, I was scared, I was definitely *uneasy*, I mean  
I wasn't scared like I'm gonna start *crying*, or anything like that,  
But I was definitely *uneasy*. I mean,  
Again, there was just something, I don't know if it's **instinct**, or something like that, but you know when  
there's just something that doesn't...

MK: Sit right...  
R: Sit right. Exactly, so...I got away from that.  
And *boy!* Think how different would be if I didn't, and actually *did*  
Go to the guy. If I got **molested**  
That would lead to, *God* only knows what kind of trauma  
And I probably wouldn't be sitting here with you now  
*Telling* this story, because...

MK: It would have been too painful, proly...  
R: Well, it would have been painful, but I don't think I would have been able to have...  
A *normal*...life.  
Or at least I would have had to **work hard** at it. I don't think I would be the kind of person that I am  
*Now*  
If something like that happened. But, you know, in a given lifetime,  
There are always these little *fateful* decisions, crossroads, uh,  
That you get to, where, you know, one direction, you'll be o.k., the other direction [*sardonic laughter*], bad!

\* \* \*  
MK: Do you think the divorce, really *affected* you at all? 'Cause it doesn't seem like you have...  
R: Do I think the what?

MK: **Divorce**.  
R: No, I was too young for the divorce to have affected me, I think it might have...  
MK: 'Cause it doesn't seem like you have *negative* memories...

R: No.  
MK: From that period at all.  
R: No, the only memories that I have were of when my mom would get *very* upset with my dad over the  
phone, and I didn't like that because I didn't like it  
When my mom **cried**.

Nobody likes it when their parents cry. Nobody likes it when people cry in general.  
*That* would probably be the only negative memories, but even that was, didn't happen all that often.  
I mean, I think it's truly a testament to  
My **dad**

In the sense that, whenever he would pick us up ev'ry other weekend,  
He would take us out to **eat**,  
*Always*.  
Despite the fact that he was out of work for a year and a half, despite the fact that he had **debt**, and, what  
not, he went out of his way to make it *special* for us.

\* \* \*  
[Ryan has been talking about the family dynamic of and personality differences between himself, his sister,  
and his step-brother and sister.]

R: Of the four kids I always had the money.  
I always had the **WORK** ethic, between them, and I think that's also a product of  
Selling **golf** balls. I think doing that

*Gig*

Really established a WORK ethic in me.

I don't know how.

I don't know why.

But I think it *did*. Because I think I do have a really solid work ethic *now*.

Well, I think it's partially that and partially mom and dad not giving me allowance

And just, if I wanted money I'd have to do a **money** job, a chore.

And I didn't

**Mind**

Doing that because I could **see** the end *results*, I could see that I was getting paid for the hard work that I  
was doing.

\*

\*

\*

MK: Do you think selling golf balls and being your own boss and stuff relates to what you want to do *now*?

[*Ryan is working on a business plan to potentially open his own music store.*]

R: As far as opening up a shop?

MK: Yeah.

R: I think it most **definitely** does.[...] I don't *mind* doing hard work as long as I can see an end justifying  
the *means*.

\*

\*

\*

R: That's what I think is part of the *lure* of starting my own small business, you know,

Back from the days of doing golf balls, and, you know, setting my own schedule, doing what I love to *do*,  
and **excelling** at it [...] I don't think I would even consider something like that if I hadn't had my roots in  
selling **golf** balls, and stuff like that.

MK: And that all goes back to your collections?

R: Yeah.

MK: That's funny.