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Post No. 33

## BESPECTACLED

### *A BLOG POST BY KIMSTER KENDALL*

I must admit that when Harrison asked me if I'd like to contribute an article for his blog, I was not sure whether or not to accept his offer. After all, if you are going to write a blog post, you need to have something to say. And although I am actually quite a talkative hamster (and Harrison would probably say that it's sometimes quite difficult to get me to shut up), when I thought about sitting down at my computer with a blank screen in front of me, I felt absolutely terrified. What if I couldn't think of anything to write?

When I explained my problem to Harrison, he absolutely insisted that I write something for his blog, if only to prove to myself that I could. I guess he had more confidence in me than I did in myself. Of course, I could not let him down after that, could I? So that's how you, Harrison's dear readers, have ended up reading a blog post by me, Kimster Kendall.

The experience I've decided to recount to you began when I received a letter in the post from my optician, reminding me that I was overdue for my eye test. Not thinking very much about it, I made an appointment for the following Saturday. I thought that since I would be on the high street anyway, I might do a little shopping after my eye test - I do like to treat myself to nice things from time to time - and then meet up with Harrison for a spot of lunch.

Fast-forward to Saturday morning, and there I was, sitting in front of the eye chart, trying to process what the optician had just told me. As I sat there, I was aware that the optician was still talking to me, but I could not pay attention to anything he was saying. All I could think about was the fact that I, Kimster Kendall, needed glasses.

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Having gathered my thoughts, I interrupted the optician. "Are you sure?" I asked.

"Sure?" he said, his tone quizzical.

"Are you sure that I need glasses?" I asked.

"That's what your test indicates, I'm afraid, Miss Kendall."

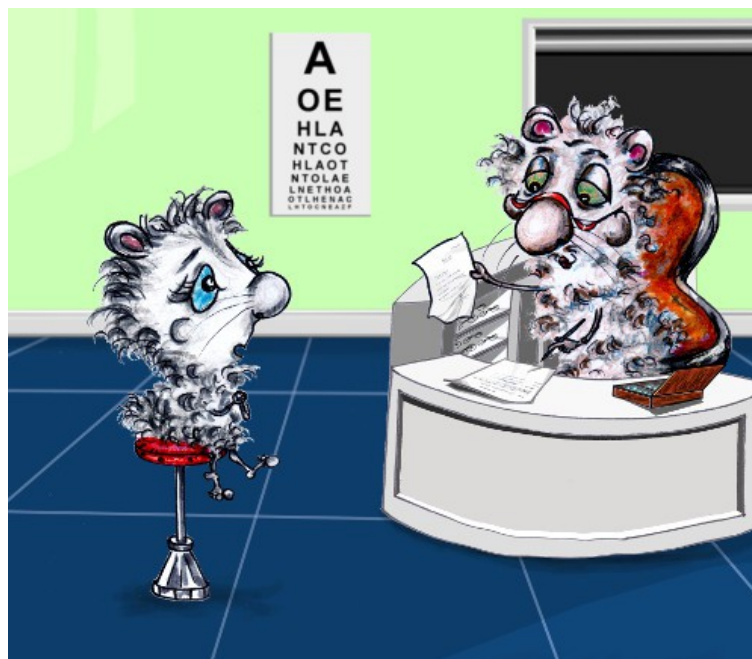
"But that's impossible!" I protested. "I look dreadful in glasses!"

"Sadly, many of us need glasses to correct our vision, Miss Kendall. But your prescription is very mild - just a small correction, really. And you'll only need to wear your glasses for reading and other close work, not all the time."

"But I only had problems reading the eye chart when you covered my left eye. I would never read anything in real life with a patch over one of my eyes. So, I'm sure you'll agree that I don't actually need glasses."

"I do think you'll find wearing glasses helpful in your everyday life. You mentioned that you do a lot of work on your computer. Wearing glasses will help make sure your eyes don't get too tired when you do that," replied the optician in a kindly tone.

"But I really only had problems with those very small letters on the bottom of the eye chart," I said plaintively.



"I'm sorry, Miss Kendall, but you really do need glasses. The fact is that you are slightly long-sighted, and a pair of spectacles can easily correct that problem and make your life easier. We have some lovely frames in stock at the moment. Why don't we see which ones might suit you?"

And there it was. I had known it would come to this, but I hadn't wanted to face it. Or, rather more precisely, I had not wanted to face my face in the mirror, wearing glasses. I am not usually a vain hamster, but I do look absolutely terrible

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in glasses. Even sunglasses don't suit me. Most girls manage to look glamorous in their sunglasses, but I just look, well, rather silly.



The idea of trying on frames for my new reading glasses filled me with dread. Not only that, but I doubted I would have any spare time for shopping before meeting up with Harrison for lunch. Now I had no choice but to spend my free hour looking at frames, and instead of buying myself a little treat, I would have to spend my money on a pair of reading glasses that I didn't even want.

Gently, the optician guided me out of the small room where my eye test had taken place, leading me towards the main shop. I spun around on my heels, taking

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in rack upon rack of frames that lined the walls. In the centre of the shop, there were even more frames, these displayed in locked glass cases.



When he caught me looking towards the locked cases, the optician said, "Those are some of our most expensive frames - absolutely stunning, don't you think? If you'd like to try any of them on, just ask one of the assistants."

"I think I'll just have a look at some of these first," I said, gesturing towards the racks that lined the walls. I didn't want to say so to the optician, but I really did not want to spend a great deal of money on my new glasses if I could help it.

Just then, my phone rang. It was Harrison.

"Hi Kimster," said Harrison. "I was just wondering if you'd still like to meet up for lunch."

"Well, it would have to be a late one."

"Why? You can take a break from shopping, you know. The shops will still be there later on this afternoon." Harrison sounded a little bit huffy.

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"I know, but I really want to choose my frames now, and you know how awful I look in glasses," I replied, a touch indignantly.

"Wait a second. Are you telling me that you need glasses?" asked Harrison.

"Well, yes, I guess I am," I said. "I actually only need them for reading and using the computer and doing crafts - things like that. The optician said that I really do need them, even though I think I can see well enough. I mean, it's not my fault if I made a few little mistakes reading that silly chart when he covered one of my eyes, is it? That could not possibly mean that I need glasses. It probably means that there's something wrong with his chart. In fact, you've convinced me. He's obviously wrong: I don't need glasses. Why don't you meet me at that little diner you like, the one on the corner, and we'll get some lunch?"



"Huh?" Maybe Harrison had not heard me.

"You're right, Harrison. I don't need glasses, so we can go for lunch now," I said.

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"I don't think I said that. I don't think I said much of anything. But if the optician said that you need glasses, you ought to take his advice. Just wait there. I'll come over and help you choose your frames. After that we can have a nice lunch together, don't you think?" Harrison did not even wait for me to reply, and I knew that in a few minutes he would arrive at the optician's.



There was no use kidding myself. I was getting glasses, and that was that. I thought I ought to get on with trying on some frames while I waited for Harrison. If I could narrow the choice down to just a few pairs, he could help me

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make the final decision. Just then, one of the assistants approached me. "You look a little lost. Would you like some help?"



"That would be great," I said. "Are there any styles you'd recommend?"

"Well, these retro frames are the height of fashion at the moment," said the assistant, handing me a bold pair of frames in black plastic.



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I tried not to laugh when I saw myself in the mirror.



All I needed was a fake moustache and a big plastic nose, and I'd be set for a new career in comedy. Of course, I am far too polite to have said that to the assistant. Instead I said, "Do you think something more subtle might work better for me?"

When I tried on the wire-rimmed frames she suggested, they just didn't feel right. I got a sinking feeling that they somehow didn't fit, but I forced myself to take a look in the mirror anyway. It's difficult to explain in words how they looked, except to say that my eyes seemed to be too big for the frames!



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"Perhaps bigger lenses would suit me better?" I suggested to the assistant, who had started to look a little annoyed.

She brought over some bright red frames with huge lenses. "Try these on," she said, her tone sullen. I have to say that I was almost afraid not to do as she said.

Well, the frames were far too big. The lenses not only covered my eyes, they covered half my cheeks as well!



And they were bright red! Aargh!!! At least I didn't have to say anything to the assistant, who wordlessly handed me another pair of frames.

I was wearing them when Harrison arrived.

"Kimster!" called Harrison.

I turned towards the door, where Harrison stood waving. Tortoiseshell, with rounded lenses, I had not yet even looked at this latest set of frames in the mirror.

"Are those your new glasses?" Harrison asked.

"No, not yet. I'm just trying them on. What do you think?"

"Well, do you like them? That's the most important thing," hedged Harrison.

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"I haven't actually looked at them in the mirror yet. I thought they might make me look intelligent."

"Kimster, you always look intelligent. You actually have very intelligent eyes. But those spectacles don't suit your personality. You shouldn't even bother looking at them in the mirror. They just don't look right on you."

I turned towards the mirror. I couldn't help myself. When Harrison said that I shouldn't bother looking in the mirror, I had to see for myself how I looked in the tortoiseshell frames.



"Oh, Harrison, it's hopeless!" I cried. "This is the fourth pair of frames I've tried, and not one of them looks right. Who am I kidding? I never have looked nice in glasses! Maybe I should just buy these and stop wasting my time."

"You mustn't give up that easily, Kimster," said Harrison. "Just look at all these frames. There have to be some here that will suit you. In fact, I think I might have an idea."

With that, Harrison marched over to the assistant who'd been helping me (well, not really helping me, but that's the expression, isn't it?). She had been slouching against the wall, looking bored. Harrison caught her attention and whispered something I couldn't hear to her, gesturing towards me.



Then the assistant scurried towards the back of the shop.

Harrison marched back over to my side. "I've told her what we need, and she's gone to the back room to have a look."

A few minutes later, the assistant emerged from the back room. She was carrying one pair of frames.

"Not much choice there, then," I said to Harrison, giving him a sidelong glance.

"Let's give them a chance," Harrison said evenly.

The assistant handed me the frames. I slipped them on without really taking a good look at them. I had pretty much resigned myself to looking terrible in my new reading glasses, whichever frames I ended up choosing.

As soon as he saw me, Harrison smiled. "Now go and look at those in the mirror," he said.

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I could not believe it. They fit perfectly. Better than that, I didn't look terrible. I didn't look terrible at all.



As I looked more closely, I could see that the lenses were rimless at the bottom, so they just sort of melted into my face almost as if they were part of it. The frames were made of metal, but instead of being a silver or gold colour, the metal was painted a dusty pink. Best of all, near the corners of the frames, there were some little flowers! These frames were just perfect for me, and I could not wait to wear them!

I ordered my lenses, and the assistant said that I could pick up my glasses in an hour.

"Perfect," said Harrison. "I think it's time for that lunch!"

As we walked out of the optician's I turned to Harrison.

"There's just one thing I have to ask," I said.

"Shoot," said Harrison, smiling at me.

"What did you say to the assistant that made her pick out the perfect frames for me?"

"I just told her a bit about you," said Harrison.

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"But what exactly did you tell her?" I persisted.

"Well, I told her that your favourite colour is pink."

"And what else?" I asked.

"I might have said that you love flowers."

"Anything else?" I really wanted to know.

Harrison's cheeks turned red. "Aww, do I really have to tell you?" he asked.



"Please, please, please Harrison," I begged.

"Well, I said that you are really pretty..." Harrison trailed off, his cheeks now a really bright shade of red.

"And?" I prompted him.

"And that you needed glasses that were pretty enough for you, but not so bold that they'd distract from your beautiful blue eyes," Harrison muttered, looking at the floor.



"That's so sweet, Harrison," I said, kissing one of his bright red cheeks. "And I do love my new frames."

"Well, just remember to wear them whenever you're doing any close work - reading or crafting or using the computer. That's the important thing." Harrison gave me a stern look. It hadn't taken him long to regain his composure.

I nodded my head obediently. Of course I'd wear my glasses for all those things. That was the whole point, wasn't it?

Well, I must note at this juncture that I've been wearing my new glasses whilst typing this blog post. The optician was right: now that I have reading glasses, my eyes don't feel nearly as tired as they normally would after so long in front of the computer screen.

And that leads me to the moral of my blog post: if you need glasses, wear them with pride. Wearing glasses is a lot better than not being able to see properly - and aren't we lucky that so many problems with eyesight can be fixed just by wearing spectacles? So always go for regular eye tests, and if you think you can't see properly now, book one today. If it turns out that you need glasses, don't allow yourself to spend time worrying about how you will look when you wear them, even if you've always thought you look terrible in glasses. Instead,



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remember that you only need to find the right frames for you (and if you are lucky, a good friend will find them for you). You'll end up bespectacled and looking fabulous - just look at me!



Kimster Kendall