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WHAT WOULD YOUR GRANDMA SAY?

On one crisp morning while patrolling a section of the North Platte River that was notorious for the illegal activity that occurred during the spring rainbow spawning run and the walleye run, I was sitting on a high rock ledge overlooking the river when I noticed movement below me at the water's edge. There sat a plump middle aged man fishing with several poles. I watched the man attend to each pole while acting very suspiciously and secretive. Wyoming law, at that time, restricted fishermen to fish with a single pole, as trout are fairly easy to catch while they are spawning. I watched the man creel several large rainbows. After about 30 minutes, I decided he was fishing alone and was purposely using too many poles to enhance his chances of catching fish.

I climbed down the ledge and approached the man. He seemed a bit surprised and nervous when I showed him my badge and identified myself as a game warden. I told the man I was going to issue him a citation for fishing with too many poles and asked him for his license. In a strong Italian accent, he told me that it was in his camper parked about a quarter mile away. As we walked silently to his camper, the man turned to me and said in his accent, "Watta you name?" I told him my name and he said it several times under his breath. Then he said, "Are you a Dego?" I told him I indeed did have an Italian background on my father's side of the family. He said, "I am a Dego, too. Youa nota gonna write another Dego a ticket are you?" I told him my mind was made up and I was going to write him a ticket. He threw his arms in the air and said, "Whata you Grandma say if she knew you wrote another Dego a ticket?" I told him I doubted it mattered much to her. As we approached the camper, I again requested to see his driver's license. He said, "You lika the wine?", as he opened the trunk of the car. I told him that I enjoy a glass occasionally. He pulled a bottle of wine from his trunk that was packaged in an old screw top whiskey bottle and held it toward me saying, "Ia giva youa this bottle of wine, if you noa write me a ticket." I politely refused his offer and again requested his driver's license. He said, "Ah, I never knew a Dego to refuse the winea.", as he placed it back in the trunk of his car. He said, "Youa ever come to Denver?" I told him that I made it there occasionally. He said, "Ia fixa your cara if you ever coome to Denver and break down.", as he handed me one of his business cards. I told him no thanks and I still needed to see his driver's license. He said, "Mya sister, shea cuta you hair for freea if you no writta me a ticketa." I again refused. Running out of things to barter, he threw his hands in the air and said, "AH!", and gave me his license.

As I was filling out the citation, his partner came walking down the road and stopped to see what was going on. The man said to his partner, "Youa told me not to fish with more than one pole, or the warden will give me a ticketa." His partner said, "Yep, I told you." I explained the citation to him, collected the \$40 bond, and gave him his copy. When I turned to leave he said, "Heya, Ia wanna you to taka thisa bottle of wine anyway.", pulling one from the trunk of the car. "Ia wanna you to taka ita home tonighta and drink it alla. Then I want youa to feel badda in the morning for writting another Dego a ticketa." We both laughed.