

About the Situation with Ash/Dusty

Disclaimer: I am not a mod on any projects currently affected by this situation, I am not speaking in the name of any mod team or in the name of Ash or of any contributor or customer affected, except myself. This write-up is my opinion and my opinion alone and shouldn't be taken to represent the opinion of any mod team involved or of any contributor.

Frankly, I think the mods of Wrioney Zine are doing an excellent job, so I really mean it when I say to please not use this write-up to put pressure on them or harass them in any way, they already have enough to deal with.

Having previously worked with Ash on Lumine Anthology for shipping, I was willing to give him the benefit of the doubt regarding his intentions and honesty about the state of each project when the situation first started coming to light. Lumine Anthology had some mishaps—books Ash claimed were lost during an emergency move out of his warehousing location, because of a flood, that had to be reordered; Ash sticking to the deadline I asked him to commit to for shipping by the skin of his neck—but overall the project went fine. Items were packaged securely and beautifully and no major order errors occurred.

I am a contributor on two zines affected by this situation. One is the Wriothesley zine, Tempestuous Destiny, the other is the Wrioney zine, L'Illusionniste et le Duc. I am also the formatting mod for a zine Ash ended up dropping from, the Fontaine siblings zine, Rain & Sunshine. Since Ash dropped from Rain & Sunshine, I assumed he had a modicum of self-awareness with regards to his zine management capacity at the time, and would know when to drop from a project.

ETA: As of June 23rd, 2025 I am no longer a contributor of the Wriothesley zine. As retaliation for me writing this document and posting it publicly, Ash has taken it upon himself, without the other mods' consent and without prior notice or attempt at discussion whatsoever, to kick me from the zine server and deny me the right of a clear communication channel with him and his team. As a result, I have let him know that my work is no longer to be considered part of his zine and renounced my compensation. [You can read my fic here!](#)

Unfortunately, I feel like I was mistaken. I was still willing to give Ash the benefit of the doubt until pretty recently, but I no longer am. His updates on Twitter do not give the full picture of the situation.

Wrioney Zine

Wrioney zine is now in “negotiations” with him as to what is going to happen to the project. **The contributors 100% unanimously asked the mods to have Ash reship the merch he has already received to another shipping mod & transfer the funds to someone else**—specifically, the option contributors supported was for Ash to not have access to the money, not do any part of the shipping, and hand everything off to another mod as soon as possible. The trust between him and contributors is fully broken and this is the resolution we want. Yet, Ash refuses to comply with the decision, citing reasons which, in my opinion, are fully bogus. In the last round of discussions, according to the report we have from the Wrioney mod team, Ash’s arguments against transferring are:

- It would be too pricy to reship to another mod to do shipping. **Instead, Ash is suggesting to do “partial shipments” to customers with the merch he has, and the other shipping mod can ship everything else.** This is ridiculous and would absolutely be much pricier than reshipping everything to another shipping mod—international customers have to be shipped to with simple export rate, which has a minimum fee of \$11 for Canada \$14 for everywhere else. Reshipping everything to another mod would cost, at most, a few hundred dollars. Shipping dozens of customer orders twice would easily end up pricier.
- He is legally liable to ship the orders that customers paid to him through PayPal. **Not really true. Customers are entitled to receive their packages, that’s it.**
- If customers file a chargeback, he’ll have to pay regardless of if he still has the funds or not. **Mods have already offered 1) let him stay in the server so he can let the mods know if this happens, and 2) let him keep a few full bundles’ worth of funds just in case.** He is refusing both of these compromises.
- Ash claimed something about his tax ID number being tied to the orders/ customers/ fulfillment. **The whole server scratched their heads about this and we have no idea what he’s talking about.** We have yet to receive any clear answer on what he means by that and the link to the relevant official guidelines/ law/ documentation of any sort.

Overall the things that are rubbing me the wrong way are the following:

1) Ash was asked to submit full screenshots of payment receipts to the mod team. What he submitted was doctored to such a degree that it was impossible to check them for authenticity. The only thing that was submitted are order summaries—an Alibaba quote sheet (tho that’s for items we know he has ordered as he has provided pictures of the produced merch) and an “order summary” that doesn’t tell much and doesn’t show that it’s been paid. The longer he delays showing proper proof of everything to the mod team, the more suspicious it gets.

2) Ash ordered everything for the zine in flat quantities of 100, making the educated guess even before preorders ended that this amount would be enough to cover both customer orders and contributor copies. **We have yet to have any confirmation that this will be the case, or that he hasn't grossly overestimated any quantities.** The zine has over 51 orders (was at 51 before they were extended for 2 weeks) and I can count 36 mods and contributors. I don't know how many of the orders were full bundles vs digital only copies, we don't have a full breakdown of anything. It's very possible we have a razor-thin margin for manufacturing errors and so contributors will have to get B-grades, that we don't even have enough to cover everything, or that 100 is a lot more than we needed for multiple items. There's no telling because we do not have the info as no compensation form has even been posted. **ETA: The mods have clarified with me that the zine has theoretically enough of everything (if Ash has ordered everything he claims to have ordered), but barely.**

3) Overall, Ash's attitude is getting increasingly suspicious. What rubs me the wrong way the most is how he acts as if the decision should be fully his, what *he* thinks is best for the zine should prevail, regardless of what the mod team or the contributors want, as though it's more *his* project because he holds the funds and the merch than ours, and **how dare we even ask to have a say about what happens to those?** Zines are collective projects, but the way he behaves and his discourse are totally contrary to the collective spirit of zines. When 100% of the contributors want you to leave, that's what you do! I don't understand how this is hard to comprehend.

Wriothesley Zine

Ash is the head mod of Wriothesley Zine. Ash gave an update in May and production is supposedly well underway, along with some pictures of items in production. That's all I know.

About Rain & Sunshine

Preorders for this zine are currently on hold and I won't talk about it to respect the process that's going on behind the scenes. Discussions are happening actively within the mod team, we are still unsure about the outcome and will communicate when we have made a fully informed decision.

However, what I can talk about is Ash's involvement with the project before his departure.

First of all, during initial discussions for the project's timeline, Ash asked for the zine's draft to be made and ready for print by the time we would **open** preorders. This is something I have

never done and I am never able to commit to a specific deadline for zine formatting because of the following factors that are out of my control:

- Pieces being late/needing major revisions (e.g. artists forgetting bleed)
- Beta reading being late
- Accommodations for last-minute pinch hitters
- I am also working on other zines at the same time
- Contributors need time to review the draft and approve it before it can be considered “ready for print”

And a huge lull between the end of the creation period and launch of preorders can cause the zine to lose traction on social media (esp. Twitter) which can be more detrimental to sales than the absence of formatting samples to show off.

Ash cited issues with other zines they're on being endlessly delayed because of formatting taking forever. I think I have established myself as reliable and quick for formatting work, and I also know when to step down. I finished formatting and took over all roles except shipping and graphics for Lumine Anthology after my apartment had a fire and I had to relocate for 6 months. I also completed formatting for another zine around the same time, during my relocation. In hindsight, I believe the reason for this request was because Ash was wanting to proceed the same way with Rain & Sunshine as he is currently proceeding with Wrioney Zine: eyeballing quantities of everything before POs are over and compensation forms have been filled, so he can begin ordering things ahead of POs ending.

I think this is extremely risky and also really sus regarding Ash's ability to commit to work on a zine. There is a huge risk of over- or under-ordering some items, which can all take a significant toll on the project's finances (either by way of having spent more money than necessary on production or having to spend extra money to order some items twice). I am also really concerned that by using this one “hack” to actually kickstart production, Ash is giving himself licence to neglect projects that are several years in the making and still not fulfilled, such as the Victuuri Wedding Zine, which just announced they won't even be holding leftover sales. **In my opinion, if you are late on older projects, you should not commit to more projects.** I feel like this is common sense, but apparently not everyone understands this.

Second major issue I want to point out: After the interest check, Ash did not determine a merch lineup we would want in the zine based on what would fit within what people were willing to spend; nor did he calculate how many contributors we should accept across different categories. **This has been standard to me on all zines I've been on with other finance mods.** He was also not available to discuss applications or weigh in on who we accepted as merch

artists and what their assignments would be, so our mod team flew fully blind into that part of the process which has significant finance implications. Yes, Ash told us he would not be available, but did not do his job (of confirming what merch we should do and how many contributors should be accepted) before leaving on his trip. When he came back a month later, it was to announce that he was dropping his position. I could not be present much during this time as I was getting married, and busy with the preparations, so I only noticed the issues after a lot of communications with contributors had already happened, so this left our team scrambling to try and rectify the situation and also be looking for another finance mod.

Bottom Line

In my opinion, Ash's resistance to handing over the funds for Wrioney Zine and reshipping the merch to the new finance/ production/ shipping mod is frankly bizarre at this point. The objections to the funds and merch transfer are ludicrous and further harming whatever is still left of people's trust—even mine. If the funds are truly there, if the merch is truly paid for, then Ash has nothing to hide and no reason to delay this any further. It is looking increasingly possible that funds have been misappropriated. If it's not the case, why the resistance? Ash, if you're reading this: if people have no reason to be worried, stop giving them reason to be worried... It's really that simple.

— George (@fairytunes.bsky.social)