

FRANCES: Concentrate on the beads. To and fro, to and fro.

BRAD watches the necklace closely.

FRANCES: Your eyelids are becoming heavy.

BRAD becomes drowsy.

BRAD: I don't think this is...

He is asleep and snoring. FRANCES puts her necklace back on.

FRANCES: Now Brad, first of all, I want you to stop snoring.

BRAD ceases.

FRANCES: I am going to suggest something to you and you will carry it out without question. Do you understand?

BRAD: *[in a monotone]* I understand.

FRANCES: Good. When I cough, you will undergo an immediate transformation. You will become the most incredibly gifted lawyer in the world. There will be no situation that you cannot handle. You will simply be... unstoppable. Is that clear?

BRAD: Very clear.

FRANCES: Excellent. When you hear a second cough, you will return to your normal self. Now, I'll clap my hands and you will awaken and remember nothing.

FRANCES claps her hands. BRAD opens his eyes slowly.

BRAD: What happened?

FRANCES: Let's just say I, *[singing]* "said a little prayer for you".

BRAD: I don't feel any different.

FRANCES beams.

FRANCES: Just give it a chance to kick in.

BRAD: *[unconvinced]* Okay but first we have to look around for the vet.

FRANCES continues smiling.

FRANCES: I called him. He knows about the hearing. He'll be here.

BRAD: Why are you so happy?

FRANCES: I feel the positive energy inside you, growing.

BRAD: I'm not sure about that and if I can't convince the Magistrate to let the case go on, even my lucky Star Wars pyjamas won't help.

FRANCES puts her arm around BRAD.

FRANCES: Don't worry. The force is with you, Brad.

SIMON enters.

SIMON: *[smugly]* Not interrupting anything, am I?

FRANCES removes her arm.

SIMON: *[to BRAD]* So, what do you do for an encore, walk on the ceiling?

BRAD: *[defiantly]* You'll just have to wait and see.

SIMON: What I want to see is how you stop the Magistrate throwing you out of court. This ought to be good.

FRANCES: You'll be laughing out of the other side of your face in a minute.

SIMON: Madam, the next time you want to sue a large corporation, can I suggest you get a real lawyer not one who belongs in a circus?

VOICE: All rise!

MAGISTRATE NEWMAN enters reticently then takes her seat. The others sit down.

MAG. NEWMAN: Outrageous! In all my years on the Bench I have never witnessed such scenes as just took place.

SIMON: Indeed, Your Honour. Outrageous!

MAG. NEWMAN: I'm either having a nightmare or I've just experienced the most flagrant example of disrespect towards the court imaginable. Mr Pitt, I will give you one opportunity to address me before I consider what penalty to impose upon you.

BRAD rises, shaking like a leaf.

BRAD: You see, Your Honour, I, I...

FRANCES coughs loudly. BRAD stops shaking and stands erect. A look of self assuredness comes over him.

BRAD: I wish firstly to apologise unreservedly for my apparent inappropriate behaviour.

MAG. NEWMAN: "Apparent"!

BRAD: Most definitely, Your Honour. In fact, I was making a point, even at the risk of getting Your Honour off side.

MAG. NEWMAN: It better be a very good point.

BRAD: I took on the persona of a simple, ordinary man, the kind that buys the Defendant's products. He is "apparently" weak and defenceless yet, when pushed too far and taken advantage of, as the Plaintiff was in this case, he fights back in a blind rage seeking justice against a bloody-minded and heartless opponent.

SIMON: I object, Your Honour, strenuously!

BRAD: *[to SIMON]* Don't strain yourself too much. I want to make sure you finish the case so you can *[sarcastically]* "crush me".

MAG. NEWMAN: Mr Pitt, I don't approve of such methods. I'm minded to enter a judgment against your client right now and to hold you in contempt.

BRAD: I would implore Your Honour not to hold my client responsible for my unorthodox practices. That would be, I hesitate to say it, unfair. So please, do what you want to me but let my client have unfettered and robust representation until the conclusion of this matter. Then Your Honour can "let me have it".

MAG. NEWMAN: Well, I don't want the Plaintiff to be disadvantaged.

BRAD: Yes, Your Honour and if I might recite a little limerick... for your assistance.

"There once was a lawyer who found,
That by convention he was bound,
He promised to be good,
As only he could,
His respect for Your Honour profound."

The MAGISTRATE smiles. SIMON jumps up.

SIMON: I object!

MAG. NEWMAN: To what?

SIMON: *[amazed]* Your Honour was smiling. Your Honour never smiles.

BRAD: *[to SIMON]* Why don't you give it a try?

SIMON sneers at BRAD.

BRAD: If I might proceed with the case, Your Honour.

MAG. NEWMAN: Yes, all right, Mr Pitt but I'm watching you... very closely.

BRAD: And there's no-one I'd rather be watched by, Your Honour.

SIMON: Oh, please!

BRAD: By the way, Your Honour, what opera will you be seeing tonight?

MAG. NEWMAN: The Flying Dutchman.

BRAD: Oh yes, Wagner. Dark and disturbing. *[pause]* Much like Mr Crookwell.

SIMON jumps to his feet.

SIMON: I object!

BRAD: You object to being dark and disturbing? I don't think we can help you with that one.

MAG. NEWMAN: Gentlemen, shall we proceed?

SIMON sits down, miffed.

MAG. NEWMAN: Would you like to call your first witness, Mr Pitt?

The MAGISTRATE coughs. BRAD's shoulders slump and he appears confused.

MAG. NEWMAN: Mr Pitt?

BRAD continues to ponder, uncertain. FRANCES leans across and coughs loudly. BRAD stands upright.

BRAD: [*confidently*] Yes, Your Honour. I call Dr James Nash. *The MAGISTRATE coughs and after a pause it is followed by another from FRANCES. DR JAMES NASH enters. He is late thirties, wearing a tan corduroy jacket and spectacles. He holds his report and appears very calm. He sits down in the witness chair. BRAD stands next to DR NASH, looking almost casual.*

BRAD: Now Dr Nash, you're a veterinary surgeon down at the Moore Park Stables.

DR NASH: I am.

BRAD: And you deal with horses day in, day out.

DR NASH: Yes, I have for almost ten years.

BRAD: As a matter of fact, when it comes to horses, you'd know more about them than the average veterinary surgeon.

SIMON jumps to his feet.

SIMON: I object. Is there a question?

BRAD turns to SIMON.

BRAD: Yes. Don't you get tired jumping up and down like a jack-in-the-box? Can't you afford a gym? Sorry, that's two questions. [*to MAGISTRATE*] If I may proceed?

MAG. NEWMAN: Go on.

SIMON resumes his seat.

BRAD: Dr Nash, you came to examine the Plaintiff's show pony, Empire Nell, early this year.

DR NASH: Yes, it was in February. Frances told me her daughter had applied a spray, Shine and Glow, to the pony the day before.

BRAD: And what did you observe?

DR NASH: The pony's skin had become flaky over its entire body. *SIMON stands up.*

SIMON: Objection!

BRAD: You know, you could get a job as a cuckoo clock?

SIMON: How does the good doctor know the skin had just

become flaky and had not been that way for quite some time?

BRAD: If I may, Your Honour?

The MAGISTRATE nods. SIMON sits down.

BRAD: [*to DR NASH*] Did you have the opportunity to examine or observe Empire Nell on previous occasions?

DR NASH: Oh yes. I saw Frances, her daughter, Eli, and Empire Nell a few times a week. Even a couple of days before the examination in February. She always looked in great condition.

BRAD turns to SIMON and beams. SIMON turns away in disgust.

BRAD: [*to DR NASH*] And did you examine Empire Nell again?

DR NASH: Yes, a week later. All her hair had fallen out including her tail and mane. She was in a bad way.

BRAD: And Dr Nash, with all your experience as a vet dealing primarily with horses, have you reached a conclusion on the cause of Empire Nell's condition?

DR NASH: I have. I believe the spray caused her condition for two reasons. Firstly, the onset occurred so soon after the spray was applied. Secondly, the spray contains tea tree oil which is a known irritant.

BRAD leans forward.

BRAD: Known by whom, doctor?

DR NASH: The medical profession and product manufacturers.

BRAD: Thank you, doctor.
He turns to SIMON.

BRAD: Start crushing.
BRAD takes a seat. FRANCES smiles and places a hand on his shoulder and squeezes for a moment. SIMON stands, holding the doctor's report in front of him, reading. He looks over it a tad too long.

BRAD: I know, it's got some very big words in it.
SIMON walks over to DR NASH, unamused.

SIMON: Dr Nash, how do you know that the Plaintiff's daughter applied my client's spray to the pony?

DR NASH: Eli showed me the spray bottle when she asked me to examine Empire Nell.

SIMON: She could have bought the spray bottle moments before seeing you.

DR NASH: No, she told me she and her mother bought it the day before.

SIMON: You didn't ask to see a store docket to make sure she purchased the spray the day before as she claimed?

DR NASH: It may be different in your profession, sir but I tend to believe in the honesty of those who seek my professional advice.

SIMON: You may do well to reconsider that, doctor. But the fact is, is it not, that the Plaintiff's daughter could have noticed the pony's condition and then gone out and bought my client's spray.

DR NASH: Sir, the day a child as delightful and honest as Eli starts lying to me is the day I'll become a lawyer.
BRAD shoves a hand in the air.

BRAD: *[smiling]* High five, doctor!

MAG. NEWMAN: Mr Pitt, I'm still watching.

BRAD: And I'm glad you are, Your Honour.
SIMON moves over to his table and drinks from a glass of water for an eternity.

BRAD: Watch out! The dam level's falling.

SIMON: *[angrily]* If you don't mind, I have something in my throat.
SIMON coughs. BRAD slumps. FRANCES leans over to BRAD and coughs too. BRAD recovers. SIMON returns to DR NASH.

SIMON: And tell me, doctor, would you consider yourself an expert in equine dermatology?

DR NASH: I know a fair bit having treated thousands of horses.

SIMON: But are you an expert?

DR NASH: It depends on how you define "expert".

SIMON: Well, would you know as much about skin conditions of horses as an Equine Dermatologist who specialises in that area?

DR NASH: No but...

SIMON: Thank you.

BRAD: *[to MAGISTRATE]* If the witness could finish his answer, Your Honour. I know I'd like to hear it.

MAG. NEWMAN: *[to DR NASH]* You may finish your answer.

DR NASH: No but in my professional opinion, as a veterinary surgeon, the spray was the most likely cause of Empire Nell's condition.

SIMON: *[sarcastically]* In your opinion as a non-specialist.

DR NASH: Yes.

SIMON: No further questions.

MAG. NEWMAN: Re-examination, Mr Pitt?

BRAD: No, I think we'll quit while we're ahead, *[turning to SIMON]* way ahead, Your Honour.

MAG. NEWMAN: Then we'll break for morning tea.