

THE COMIC OF EVIL

Satire in one act

The scene is set in a courtroom. Judge, witnesses and the court reporter are facing the public, the devil's advocate and the devil are sitting on the judge's right, solicitor Da Vino on his left. The scene is lit by candlelight, one of the candles is on the judge's table. Two security guards are standing at the door.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE:

JUDGE – God himself, dressed in a judge's robe, wearing a wig

SOLICITOR DA VINO – renowned theologian Thomas Aquinas, regularly succumbing to alcoholic intoxication, towards the end of the hearing he lies almost unconscious from all the wine he has drunk

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE – devil's solicitor whom the church hierarchy regularly "uses" in "investigating" saints and their miracles

DEVIL – as himself

COURT REPORTER – records the hearing

FEMALE WITNESSES: it is necessary that all be played by the same person

EVE – the one and only

JOAN – St. Joan of Arc, expelled from church and burned at the stake, later declared saint

TERESA – St. Teresa of Avila, saint known for her visions

MARILYN – a prototype of a sex-bomb

MALE WITNESSES: it is necessary that all be played by the same person

ADAM – the one and only

AUGUSTINE – St. Augustine, saint who, before becoming one, very gladly gave into women's charms

LEIBNIZ – renowned philosopher, the creator of the theodicy of evil

FREDDY – Mr Sigmund Freud, psychoanalyst, a great expert in his field

ALBERT – Mr Albert Einstein, nuclear physicist, also a respected member of human community

SIR NICHTS – Mr Nietzsche - superman

WARNING:

© Any use or reproduction of all or any part of this text without the written permission of the author is strictly prohibited.

For the author's contact please write to sigledal@gmail.com.

Any resemblance to actual persons is purely coincidental...

On stage: Devil's advocate, solicitor Da Vino, court reporter and both security guards.

COURT REPORTER: Dear audience and jury in one, this evening you will witness a devilishly interesting trial wherein the Devil fights for the primacy to rule over sin again. Therefore listen carefully how the Devil sought his justice in order to regain the honour and the power he had given away to man. And now as custom has it to stand up in the court of law, I entreat you nicely that all without exception you do so. Please, your Lordship!

All in the courtroom rise (except the security guards who are standing throughout), enter His Honour.

JUDGE: You may sit. (*Perplexed, irate.*) Well, where is the Devil hiding?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Your Grace must forgive me.

JUDGE: Well, what is it?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: The Devil's late.

JUDGE: Look at the devil, what in the hell is he thinking! That fox, what the devil is he thinking. That we all should gather here and wait for him!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: He will be here presently.

JUDGE: Better for him, or else he'll see hell. What can he mean thus wasting judicial time. *Enter Mr Devil.*

DEVIL: Excuse me, Your Grace. It will not happen again...

JUDGE: ... that the devil should seek forgiveness. While I am still sitting, let us begin, please!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Your Honour, members of the jury. We are gathered here today to take part in a seemingly odd trial. My client, Mr Devil, has filed a lawsuit against the human pest which, to put it mildly, has him all perplexed. In short, humans now claim primacy in sin, though we all know very well only the devil the price can tell.

SOLICITOR DA VINO: I object! There is no evidence that Mr Devil is the bearer of sin, this must yet be proven!

JUDGE: Objection sustained, the Devil does not yet have the right to sin.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: My client is an expert in sin, which shall be demonstrated in these hearings, so let us therefore start with the proceedings. I call my first witness, Sir Adam. *Enter Adam in his costume.*

JUDGE: Where does he think he is going? The beach? Provide him please with appropriate attire!

Court reporter adorns him in a longer shirt.

COURT REPORTER: Will this do?

JUDGE: It will make do.

COURT REPORTER: Swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth.

ADAM: I swear.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Sir Adam, what do you do?

ADAM: I was... a gardener to the judge.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Ah, such is the case?

JUDGE: Hold your comments, prosecutor!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I apologise, Your Honour. (*To Adam*) Did you work quite hard there?

ADAM: It was as nice as ever!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Where do you garden now?

DEVIL (*to himself*): In his wife's bush...

ADAM: We have our own garden...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: We?

ADAM: Me and my wife Eve!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Quite right, and Eve, your wife?

ADAM: She's got a wretched life.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Really, why? Childless?

ADAM: All of human kind...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Oh, congratulations, a fruitful sowing...

ADAM: Thank you... it'd be better had the seed gone foul!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And where did you two meet?

ADAM: His Honour would be the wiser here!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE (*to the judge*): She also picked fruit in your garden?

JUDGE: It is not good for a man to be alone...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: ... so you made her bed right in your home!

JUDGE: Let me warn you once again, prosecutor, tend rather to your witness!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: At once, Your Honour, on the spot. (*To Adam*) And what interrupted this idyllic scene?

ADAM: How do you mean?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Simply! Why did it all go down the drain?

ADAM: It is long since.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: It can't be that your nerves are playing up on you?

ADAM: My memory is!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I'll refresh it presently. *Produces an apple.* Is this matter clear to you?

ADAM: Devil's fruit!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Did I hear right – devil's fruit?

ADAM: Right!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: It has been recorded.

COURT REPORTER: As all the rest so far!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Did you hear the witness say that sin is part of Devil's play? That the Devil suffers evil we are all aware but that he is guilty of it know the two as well. Esteemed colleague, the witness is yours.

SOLICITOR DA VINO: What do I hear that the witness speaks in favour of the Devil? Sir Adam? *Shows the apple.* Whose garden did this fruit grow in?

ADAM: In the garden of the judge!

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Whose is then this fruit? *Places the apple before the judge who starts eating it.*

ADAM: It belongs to the judge...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: You claim then that this most esteemed judge is the Devil himself?

ADAM: God forbid!

JUDGE: What is this defamation that God be with the devil in relation...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: I apologise Your Honour. It was a slip of the tongue, when the witness said that that apple was the devil's. Is it not so Sir Adam?

ADAM: Indeed, quite so! The apple does not belong to the devil.

JUDGE: Therefore the witness had better make sure in the future. Court reporter!

COURT REPORTER: It has been corrected Your Honour!

JUDGE: And rightly so!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: What is this now? Objection!

DEVIL: Is this set up? The Devil seeks justice in a restroom!

JUDGE: Objection overruled, as long as the devil tells judge what to do!

DEVIL: Excuse me, Your Honour, I meant to say in a courtroom.

JUDGE: Silence in the courtroom!

SOLICITOR DA VINO: And how did it continue?

ADAM: When we took a bite our nakedness came to sight.

SOLICITOR DA VINO: That must have been hard-on you?

ADAM: Quite hard-on me...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Thank you, we'll have the details on some other occasion...

Let's rather on our next witness enter.

JUDGE: And come at once to the centre!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I call Eve to the stand! *Enter Eve, also in her costume. The court reporter wants to give her a gown but is stopped by the judge.*

JUDGE: Being that it is Madam Eve, I will admit her outfit's fit.

COURT REPORTER: Swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth.

EVE: I swear.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Excuse me Madam Eve, a very gripping outfit...

DEVIL: From the verb to grip...

SOLICITOR VINO: All outfits fit.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I've almost forgotten... Madam Eve, why do you suppose that you are here?

EVE: ... because we tricked the Devil! *Looks at the Judge.*

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: So you do have an idea...

EVE: ... devil knows what will come of this!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And how did you fare in the judge's house?

EVE: I cannot say I suffered, really.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Well then, how did it go precisely?

EVE: You know, the apple...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: ... that belongs to the judge... *looks for the apple, which the judge has eaten in the meanwhile, the judge shrugs, opens his arms and looks up to the sky.*

EVE: ... it was forbidden...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Did the snake yourself beguile...

EVE: ... oh, that wretched serpent vile!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Would you recognise this monster presently?

EVE: ... I see its image constantly!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: *Brings up a snake.* Is this the reptile?

EVE: *Startled and angry.* The same. But can it be that it is still among the living...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Madam, the snake belongs to Mr Devil. Let this be put on the record. *Places the snake before the judge who starts playing with it and then hides it in his pocket.*

COURT REPORTER: Where it will go, I don't know, but it has been recorded...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Madam Eve has recognised the culprit, which belongs to the prosecutor.

EVE: Which means that evil is the work of the devil's spawn.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I could not have put it better myself... Please, dear colleague, Madam Eve is no longer my concern.

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Madam Eve, where did you see the snake?

EVE: In the garden of the judge.

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Strange...

EVE: Why, it looked at me from the tree and heaven promised me...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Is it not true that the judge is a most conscientious master of the estate...?

EVE: Exceedingly. He is very particular, especially about the fruit from this tree.

SOLICITOR DA VINO: I am amazed that as a good proprietor he would let such a thing creep about.

JUDGE: What are you aiming at, dear colleague?

SOLICITOR DA VINO: It would be quite impertinent to say that Your Grace allows such negligence. It is after all, as Madam Eve has said, but the devil's spawn. And as a good master of the estate... *Looks for the snake, but it is hidden in the judge's pocket.*

JUDGE: There is no chance that this reptile ever in my garden crept around.

SOLICITOR DA VINO: I myself had doubted this. As a good proprietor the judge

proceeds to keep his whole estate rid of the devil's seeds. Madam Eve does stray when she does not God obey.

EVE: But I...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: ... you, Madam Eve, are still worth the sin...

EVE: Do not speak so, solicitor, I go weak at the knees...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: *Helps her off the stand.* Her legs gave out on her...

DEVIL: Because she does not hold them together close enough ... And you, in all of you there's vice...

JUDGE: Sir Devil, hold your tongue...

DEVIL: I apologise Your Honour, I meant to say there is no vice here... and that wise is your advice.

JUDGE: All advice is wise.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: God has clipped the devil's wings away so he no longer loiters in God's sacred way.

DEVIL (*to himself*): Hell knows which way my wings fly today.

JUDGE: Dear sir, have you finished with the witness?

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Your Grace, I have! *Takes a sip of wine he has hidden under the bench.*

JUDGE: Right, Madam Eve, I believe, as far as you are concerned the matter is adjourned. And our next witness is who?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: One who quite well the devil knew...

JUDGE: His name, please!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Augustine!

JUDGE: Let him approach! Do we know each other from somewhere?

AUGUSTINE: Not that I know of, Thy Lordship...

JUDGE: Are we on such friendly terms?

AUGUSTINE: Your Lordship will forgive...

JUDGE: Fine, let it be! The witness is yours...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: What do you do, witness?

AUGUSTINE: I am a saint!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Look at the devil! Probably no oath is needed here?

JUDGE: As far as I'm concerned...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Have you practiced your esteemed profession long?

AUGUSTINE: Despite all ailings for a couple hundred railings...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And before this?

AUGUSTINE: Before the calling?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Yes... back then!

AUGUSTINE: Then I had erred in sin...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Excuse me, you still suffer evil?

AUGUSTINE: Evil, evil!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And have you met the evildoer?

AUGUSTINE: Oh, that is horrible!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Well, let us hear how it was...

AUGUSTINE: I liked to give into women's charms!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Is that so? Well, well...

AUGUSTINE: It was soft, nice, warm...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: ... probably also for your lover...

AUGUSTINE: Gentle at first, not rough... and then do 'er, evil do 'er evil do 'er evil do 'er

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And it appeared?

AUGUSTINE: And I saw the Devil!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: In what form?

AUGUSTINE: I know not, it was dark!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: ... devil's companion... The Devil planted the seed of evil in the good female angel... And from then on...

AUGUSTINE : ... I travelled the path of God...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: ... and young girls, did they tempt you...?

AUGUSTINE: I cannot say they didn't. The Devil tempts everyone!!!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Did you hear the witness testify that the Devil's quite persuasive... Sir saint, as regards me I am done, but my most esteemed colleague will probably wish to go on...

SOLICITOR DA VINO (*he chokes drinking from the bottle*): Thank you, dear colleague... Dear witness, how do you see evil?

AUGUSTINE: Very well!

SOLICITOR DA VINO: So you have just said that evil can seem very well.

AUGUSTINE: No, I said I see evil very well!

SOLICITOR DA VINO: I see you have a sense of evil. If you claim then that you see evil very well, then this is almost the highest possible good. And the highest possible good cannot in any way be bad, from which it follows that evil is not always purely bad. For evil comes from good, save that there is somewhat less of it.

AUGUSTINE: What I said was simply that I recognise evil well.

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Our Lord Judge forgives evil deeds as well and this is good. You mean to say it is not so?

AUGUSTINE: By all means no...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: So your evil can only be seeming... Thank you, Your Grace!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Objection, Your Grace! Have you ever seen that good were evil! Good evil - it is blasphemy...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: You err, sir! It is not good that is evil, but evil that is good... Because it comes from good...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: If this be the case, then there is no evil...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: As far as I am concerned, no... there is only good!

JUDGE: Objection sustained. Seems well, you see well, dear colleague...

DEVIL: Evil to come from the good. Your Lordship, it is just not the way...

JUDGE: Do I hear rightly, sir Devil..?

DEVIL: Of course, Your Lordship... When was it that the devil received absolution for his evil...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: There is no evil and never will be... all is just good... more or less!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: The saint himself experienced evil...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Which was good... Is it not so...?

AUGUSTINE: It was good...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: That will be all, thank you! *The witness leaves the courtroom.*

DEVIL (*to himself*): The greatest of Devil's deceptions is to convince people he does not exist...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Dear sirs, I call to the stand a belle mademoiselle... *Enter Joan in her war attire.*

JUDGE: Miss, dressed so on court grounds...

JOAN: Court grounds or battlegrounds, what is the difference...

JUDGE: But we shall not be waging war here...

JOAN: Why not, when the truth is at stake...?

JUDGE: But not with fire and sword...

JOAN: When there is nothing else...

JUDGE: What about faith...

JOAN: In what...?

JUDGE: In justice, of course!

JOAN: Justice must be won...

JUDGE: We do take care that everything here runs fair ...

JOAN: I know these courtrooms of yours... Justice is here quite often mistaken for injustice...

JUDGE: This is in contempt of court...

DEVIL: Snort!

JUDGE: Devil...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Your Grace, shouldn't we rather begin...

JUDGE: With such a witness...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: The girl has bad memories of court...

JUDGE: Indeed!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: She was falsely accused... The highest representatives of religious powers...

JOAN: They were under Devil's power...

DEVIL: Most charming this young warrior...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: The girl was under devil's influence...

JOAN: I didn't sign a thing...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: That is why she burned and with her the stake...

JUDGE: And so they burned Satan...

JOAN: ... an innocent young maiden...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: This girl has seen the devil...

DEVIL: In truth?

JOAN: His face was full of mystery...

DEVIL: Yes, that indeed was me...

JOAN: And such soft features... like the judge's over there!

JUDGE: A most gross comparison...

JOAN: And that voice that comes from him, oh, it's leading me astray again! *Slowly she begins to rave.*

JUDGE: What is happening with the mademoiselle?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I think she's overcome by evil...

DEVIL: In truth it does seem so...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Poor girl, she suffered so much evil...

DEVIL: In the name of God...

JUDGE: Be quiet, devil...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: But she was pardoned...!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Yes, but first was killed...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Oh, God have mercy on her... *Takes a drink from his bottle.*

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: She has really seen the Devil...

JUDGE: This witness is not herself...

JOAN: For him I would burn again... *Starts brandishing the weapon.*

JUDGE: Remove the witness, lest we have her on our conscience... *Joan is taken away, she still has the mystic gaze.*

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: How now, the witness yet did see the Devil...

JUDGE: She was not a faithful witness ...

DEVIL: Not worthy of your faith for certain...

JUDGE: Will you shut the hell up already!

DEVIL (*to himself*): Whoever believes in God and his justice will experience an interminable injustice...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Oh, what the Devil might not do...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: It is an evil only seemingly... *Takes a sip again.*

DEVIL: Ah, you cannot the evil's smite!

SOLICITOR DA VINO: That evil does not exist we shall yet prove... I call to the stand... *Leibniz comes running to the courtroom visibly frightened.*

LEIBNIZ: Here I am...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: How now, sir...

LEIBNIZ: Not well...! I had a vision such, that the Devil himself would suffer much...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Whence, how?

LEIBNIZ: I searched for God, but found a sea of evil...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I beg of you now...

DEVIL: There is no evil without an evildoer...

SOLICITOR DA VINO (*startled*): Does sir feel ill? Would another time be better still...

DEVIL: Let the witness speak even if it's for Old Nick...

JUDGE: The law must be respected...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And so I ask the witness to be sworn in...

COURT REPORTER: Do you swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth?

LEIBNIZ: I love only the truth...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: ... oh, how come?

LEIBNIZ: A matter of profession...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Well, look at that...

LEIBNIZ: An expert in metaphysics...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And you say you have come across evil...?

LEIBNIZ: Evils...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Evils?

DEVIL: Excellent...

JUDGE: Sir Devil, I'm warning you, lest there should be hell...

DEVIL: I do apologise, Your Heinousness...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And what sort of evils are these...

LEIBNIZ: ... moral, physical, and metaphysical...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Moral, say you...

LEIBNIZ: A lie loves not the truth...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And who should cause such evil?

LEIBNIZ: For such evil, man is to blame, for spreading lies with no shame ...

DEVIL: And the Devil?

LEIBNIZ: Moral evil is not Devil's fault...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: What about physical evil...?

LEIBNIZ: Illness is evil. The ill suffer because they do not have God's love...

JUDGE: I beg your pardon, how...?

LEIBNIZ: Physical evil is of the Lord...

JUDGE (*surprised*): What now, another slander more that there is evil for Lord in store...

DEVIL: Well, well... We have evil after all...

LEIBNIZ: Logic proves it... Man suffers in this world innocently... And the one at fault...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: ...is our good Lord! *Looks at the judge.*

DEVIL: And the metaphysical...?

LEIBNIZ: Metaphysical evil, is the result of creation...

JUDGE: What is created is good...

LEIBNIZ: And finite...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: That is finitely good...

LEBNIZ: ... which, if finite, cannot be good... Because it is finite.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And the fault?

LEIBNIZ: Is on account of the judge... Because this evil is metaphysical... *The judge starts to wipe his brow with a handkerchief.*

DEVIL: And for the devil is there any evil left...

JUDGE: There is no evil without evildoer...

LEIBNIZ: Good and evil is all that is created... the responsibility for evil should therefore to God be delegated...

DEVIL: The deuce, devil has been robbed of evil... where on earth have you seen that evil was to God imputed...

JUDGE: But, listen, damn you... This will not stand, evil thus on God to plant...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: The law is the same for everyone... even the Lord judge...

JUDGE *(in panic)*: *Addresses solicitor Da Vino.* Esteemed colleague, please help, come now... , that God should be thus put on trial... *Solicitor Da Vino pours it away again.*

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Dear witness...

LEIBNIZ: At your service...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: You said you loved the truth...

LEIBNIZ: More than anything in the world...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: How came you by this knowledge...

LEIBNIZ: On the basis of profound understanding...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: And in full consciousness...

LEIBNIZ: You mean consciousness...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Precisely, con-sciousness...

LEIBNIZ: Yes, it was so...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: And this consciousness, it thinks freely...

LEIBNIZ: Yes, in complete freedom...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: That means the thought was not induced...

LEIBNIZ: Not in the least...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Is it true that God, if he is almighty, could prevent moral evil...

LEIBNIZ: If he is almighty, quite easily...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: And what would happen then... To prevent evil God would have to abolish freedom...

LEIBNIZ: But there are other evils, too...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Yes, physical and metaphysical... the cause of a certain thing is the cause of that which according to its kind ensues... God created an imperfect world so that man could enjoy evil... He was allowed freedom... can we then still claim that it is God who causes evil?... God does not cause evil though he does allow it...

JUDGE: ... The wish of human masses is freedom for all classes... capital, sir, capital...

LEIBNIZ (*angry with himself*): I admit... I sought the cause of bad but I sought bad... damned logic!

JUDGE (*quite relieved*): Sir Da Vino, I my gratitude will never faint!

SOLICITOR DA VINO (*visibly content*): For this I shall be saint...!

JUDGE: Who bears witness next?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Mrs Teresa!

JUDGE: Mrs? ... married already!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: According to her, yes...

JUDGE: So adultery, false alliance...

DEVIL: The Devil's claws are everywhere...

JUDGE: Is the witness credible?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: She is after all a saint...

JUDGE: Ah, so that's the case, married...?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: To God and his sonny...

JUDGE: There is no problem here, it is a sacred union... Where lies the devil here?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Precisely in this sacred union...

JUDGE: Impossible, in the sacred union...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Let rather the witness herself testify to this... *Enter St. Teresa, dressed as a nun.*

JUDGE (*to the court reporter, who wants to swear her in*): It becomes a saint to speak the truth ...

COURT REPORTER: At your own risk...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Madam, have you been a nun all your life?

TERESA: Almost!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And when did you meet your groom?

TERESA: Already as a young girl...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And he enchanted you...

TERESA: He completely took me over...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And you decided to enter with him into sacred matrimony...?

TERESA: You could say so...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE (*produces papers in the form of a diary*): Is this your writing, Mrs Teresa?

TERESA: It is mine, yes...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Can I read an excerpt, Your Grace?

JUDGE: Of course, please do...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I stooped to him in deep prayer and he did hear me and embraced me, our souls merged in one body, in this mystical union I beheld him and gave myself to him...

JUDGE (*appalled*): What is this filth?

TERESA: Your Honour, you cannot deny that you aroused me with your presence...

JUDGE: I ask the witness to control herself. It was the devil with his tricks...

DEVIL: Well, finally...

TERESA: Impossible! When I did feel you deep inside me...

JUDGE: Woman, what are you saying... *To the devil's advocate.* Show me please those notes... *The devil's advocate gives him the notes. The judge brings the notes closer to the candle on purpose, as if to see better, the notes catch fire and burn.*

JUDGE: Fire! *They put the fire out, all that is left is ashes...* Thank God, we are still alive...

DEVIL: It was Providence itself...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: But this was evidence...

JUDGE: Accidents will happen...

DEVIL: The devil is always at work...

JUDGE: It is so indeed... Mrs Teresa, you were seduced by the Devil...

TERESA: But I saw you clearly...

JUDGE: The Devil can take many forms, is it not so sir Devil...?

DEVIL: Precisely so...

TERESA: And my sainthood...

JUDGE: To err is human, is it not so, solicitor Da Vino...?

SOLICITOR DA VINO: You took the words right out of my mouth...

COURT REPORTER: And the records?

JUDGE: Let it be recorded so that it is right by all...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Then the Devil is at fault?

DEVIL: None other...

SOLICITOR DA VINO (*a bit tipsy*): It is the fault of excessive human imagination...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: That the Devil sets afire...

JUDGE: It's man's fault, because he works too little...

DEVIL (*to the judge*): The devil...!

TERESA: What of my sacred marriage...

JUDGE: Let it remain in the sanctity of renunciation...

TERESA: In renunciation of what?

JUDGE: In renunciation of sin... You are absolved now...

TERESA: Oh, how great is his love... *Leaving the courtroom, she still looks at the judge.*

DEVIL: And the fault for evil...?

SOLICITOR DA VINO: We can reach the fault for evil in its real meaning if we let the Evildoer have it. Evil is not and will not be the Devil's...

DEVIL (*to his solicitor*): What the devil is this?!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I call to the stand sir Devil himself...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: This should be fine...

COURT REPORTER: Do you swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth...

DEVIL: I swear... *To himself.* In accordance with my own truth...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Witness, where does your name come from...

DEVIL: I do not know, probably from my father...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Did you know him...?

DEVIL: ... only vaguely...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Is the origin of your name clear to you... etymologically I mean...

DEVIL: Etymo- what...?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: What does your name mean... where did you get it from?

DEVIL: The way he asks questions, the devil!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And your other name?

DEVIL: The deuce, what is he on about?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Yes, prosecutor, I did not mean that one!

DEVIL: Which one, in the name of Satan?

Z DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Not that one either.

DEVIL (*to himself*): What is he asking me, has he by the devil been possessed to act in such a way... Evildoer, I do not know which...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: That one exactly...!

DEVIL: For heaven's sake, which...?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Evildoer - of course...!

DEVIL: Ah, Evildoer...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: What did you want to become, dear witness?

DEVIL: I wanted to be a good Devil.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Of course, in line with your profession...

DEVIL: Yes, like that somehow...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And before that, what were you...

DEVIL: An angel of the Lord...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: So you were a Devil only in possibility...

DEVIL: Yes, I had the possibility of becoming a Devil....

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And it is what you have become...

DEVIL: With God's help...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Has this escaped the records?

COURT REPORTER: It has all been noted.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And so evil was manifested as your name implies...

DEVIL: Which one again?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Evil-doer. Evil is done and is no longer a mere possibility, because evil had been completed in matter ...

DEVIL: Evil had materialised... oh, how nice!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: This proves that the Devil had it nice at first. But since the Devil's nature is all evil this in the end prevailed...

DEVIL: And the fact is there is evil and it is all in Devil's hands...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I think it is not his entirely...

DEVIL: How?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Because God allowed evil, good went bad!

JUDGE: Please, sir, I do not like this matter at all ...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I'm finished with the Devil...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Court reporter, is it true the esteemed witness stated that he wanted to be a good Devil ...?

COURT REPORTER: Just a moment... yes, it was so ...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Sir Devil... If you stated that you wanted to become a good Devil, this means that you did not want to become a bad Devil, which is why your evil went down the drain...

DEVIL: The deuce, where have you ever heard of a good Devil?

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Straight from your mouth...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Oh, what the Devil will not do...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: The Devil false proclaims that man be in his gains ... there is no evil and there will be none... To rid himself of guilt, it is the easiest for a man to say it was the Devil's way.

DEVIL: God created the Devil then to punish men...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: That it was God who made the Evildoer? If God is good, why would he evil allow? ...only to let the Devil boast with it ... Man himself is the root of evil.

DEVIL: ... only in Devil's hands! Human nature likes to give into sin...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: ... evil by itself cannot stand which is why it takes a man's hand.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: The evil with evil is that it cannot be destroyed...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: With the Devil God only leads man astray ...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: With the Devil man pushes God away... Evil always has been and always will be...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Evil outwits, only good exists...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: The Devil is wronged... God planted the seed of evil in an angel ...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: ... From a good angel into a slave of evil... an unconvincing little tale.

DEVIL: God is evil because not all was good created...

JUDGE: What is this again now?

SOLICITOR DA VINO: And you, sir Devil, of course you serve God...

DEVIL: In my own way...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: And you are a being, I mean a person...?

DEVIL: A person!

SOLICITOR DA VINO: ... who is aware...

DEVIL: Perfectly...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: What about conscience...

DEVIL: What conscience?

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Do you have a conscience?

DEVIL: I have no conscience... I am against it...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Ah, right. But do you know sir Devil that conscience is always consciousness. Consciousness is conscious that it is conscience – ness. And since the Devil is not for conscience he is not conscious. Consciousness is only a person. Therefore the Devil is not a person. Only an individual that is conscious can be a person... excuse me, the Devil can only be a person in a play... *To himself*. The devil has no consciousness that is why he is easily conned... ... *To himself, a little drunk*. Therefore resist the deception the devil has in store, our battle is fought in blood and body against the Lord of Darkness, against the evil spells beneath the heaven's arch.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Let not the judge be mistaken, the Devil is a person yet...

JUDGE: Whoever errs, sins... And whoever sins, causes sin. Sin is an erroneous condition. Dear colleague, do you mean to say that I sin...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Very clever, Your Grace...

JUDGE: Thank you, esteemed colleague!

DEVIL: God forgives sinful acts but does not forgive the fault for the resulting facts...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Contradiction is sin to God...

JUDGE: (*overhears*): Is in to who...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Sin to the Lord!

JUDGE: Oh, 's into the Lord... who is into?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Sin of course!

JUDGE: Sin that 's into the Lord!!! I demand an apology!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I apologise most earnestly but how come that despite the efforts of people of good will the world suffers still?

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Because man sins, because he himself sins, and because he forces others into sin. If God does not cause sin, he does not cause the sinful condition either.

DEVIL: Curiosity in the spiritual field brings man under the Devil's wings.

SOLICITOR DA VINO: People know very well that unclean thoughts like to dwell.

DEVIL: Invisible evil rulers fashion human imagination.

SOLICITOR DA VINO: There is no evil and there will be none as long as man has fun. *He hiccups.*

DEVIL: Evil exists so that it might bring the mankind at least some delight.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: But what about when a man suffers constantly!

SOLICITOR DA VINO: It is merely evil that is seeming...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: The Devil has it rough ...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: ... so that man can laugh! *Laughs.*

DEVIL: And now you even tell that evil is comical as well...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: The comic of evil, you know, is always dirty, though... This is why when evil transpires man himself the blame acquires...

JUDGE: Yes, and so it must be ... Well, how do we end the story...?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I call the next witness on list!

JUDGE: And who might that be?

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: An expert physicist... all verified scientifically ...*Enter sir Albert.*

DEVIL: From metaphysics to physics?... as long as it helps...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I believe there is no need for an oath... Sir Albert says that truth must be... is it not so...?

ALBERT: Yes, I seek it constantly...

JUDGE: Are you close...?

ALBERT: Merely mathematically...

JUDGE: Do you at least see a way...?

ALBERT: The matter gets more dark each day...

JUDGE: As long as there is no bang...

ALBERT: Perhaps that is just it...

JUDGE: Who knows... if it is really so... How are you with time?

ALBERT: It's pressing me...!

JUDGE: You curious?

ALBERT: Enormously!

JUDGE: And what interests you?

ALBERT: The essence in all that be!

JUDGE: Well, that is essential! I beg you, dear colleague...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: How now, what do you say, can evil be described in the physical way?

ALBERT: Evil can be proved mathematically.

DEVIL: Bravo to mathematics...!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: How come?

ALBERT: On the basis of relativity...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: ... which implies as such...?

ALBERT: That evil cannot be touched...

DEVIL: And mathematics...?

ALBERT: No, this is physics... Evil predicament yields to no measurement...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: So the question of evil is pure fiction...

ALBERT: No, it's dialectics...

DEVIL: Mathematics, physics, dialectics... Where lies evil's function ...

ALBERT: Good and evil are only ways of evaluation...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: If evil can be evaluated...

DEVIL: ... Then evil is joined to objectivity...

ALBERT: No, objective evil never existed... All depends on the subject...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: ... how he evaluates evil...

ALBERT: Like this somehow, if I am not precise...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Well, this then will suffice...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Dear sir physicist, is it true you are a pacifist?

ALBERT: Was...!

SOLICITOR DA VINO: What do you mean, was?

ALBERT: For a greater evil to be gone a minor operation is sometimes sine qua non.

SOLICITOR DA VINO: So evil's destruction justifies a little bomb's construction...
Then there is evil and must be...

ALBERT: Yes, it would seem so...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: And if evil is necessary, then it is justifiable... But if it is justifiable, it is no longer evil...

ALBERT: So evil cannot be justified...?

JUDGE: Precisely so, because it is no longer evil...

ALBERT: The Lord is cunning but not wicked...

JUDGE: Thank you... nature hides its secretes with sublimity and not cheap trickery...

DEVIL: And mathematics...?

ALBERT: Mathematics is logic...

DEVIL: And evil?

ALBERT: Evil is and is not!

DEVIL: How come...

ALBERT: It is conditioned by human logic...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: And the Devil?

ALBERT: Let him go to hell... *Leaves the courtroom. A provocatively dressed Marilyn bursts into the courtroom.*

MARILYN: Did I come right...?

JUDGE (*To the court reporter*): Who is this... what has she done wrong?

COURT REPORTER: I do not know, she is not on the list...

MARILYN: I want a divorce, I insist...

JUDGE: Madam, a name must exist...?

MARILYN: From that devil...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE (*to himself*): This one is just what we needed... Your Grace, I am to blame, I overlooked the madam's name...

JUDGE: And her name...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Let her herself proclaim ...

JUDGE: Well, madam, your name...

MARILYN: Mine?

COURT REPORTER: Yes, yours!

MARILYN: Marilyn!

COURT REPORTER: A most unusual name...

JUDGE: To me it's all the same...

COURT REPORTER: Swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth...

MARILYN: If needs be, I can sing as well...

JUDGE: I don't think that will be needed...

MARILYN: That I am needy...It's a lie, pure defamation. It's that Devil spreading information...

DEVIL (*to himself*): This one is really crackers... How is it she drags me into this...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE (*to Marilyn*): Please calm yourself... it is not that bad!

MARILYN: I should know what and why... And that devil took me for a wife...

JUDGE: Look at the Devil... I did not know he had it in him!

MARILYN: To him every woman readily gives in...

JUDGE: Does he ever cause you ill...

MARILYN: That is in the least. He beats me, knocks me and abuses that I am all in bruises... *Shows her bruises.*

JUDGE: Well, well... And he looks such a gentle soul...

MARILYN: That he can...

JUDGE: What?

MARILYN: He acts all the time... a lover, father, a most caring husband.

JUDGE: The Devil a father?

MARILYN: Two of them for that matter...!

JUDGE: Two of what?

MARILYN: Two little boys, if you please... but will not admit that they're his...

DEVIL: I admit at once...!

MARILYN: How nice of this gentleman...

JUDGE: Did he ever force himself on you...?

MARILYN: No, he liked to do it very much... Well, sometimes he simply had to. If he is a real man, it's his duty.

JUDGE: And rough as well?

MARILYN: That's how I like it best!

DEVIL: The devil...

JUDGE: And why does the madam wish to get divorced...?

MARILYN: How why? Because the Devil finds some things hard to do...

JUDGE: Which are...

MARILYN: To beat and batter me!

JUDGE: Hence all the bruising?

MARILYN: To exorcise the devil out of me...

JUDGE: What, are you possessed...?

MARILYN: By what? Sex?

JUDGE: By the Devil?

MARILYN: I like to be sexually well equipped...

JUDGE: ... and also with a birch be whipped...

MARILYN: Oh my God, how I'm aroused...

JUDGE: ... you need a good spanking...

MARILYN: ... do it, do it... *Starts climbing over the judge.*

JUDGE: Please control yourself or I will punish you!

MARILYN: Punish me, please!

DEVIL: He'll see the devil...

JUDGE: Help! *Two security guards come to help.*

MARILYN: What, there will be more of you. Do me, do me hard... *The security guards remove her from the courtroom.*

JUDGE *(to himself)*: One more like this and I'll sign up for the Devil on the spot...

That Devil is in want of a psychiatrist!

JUDGE: Well, is there anyone else?

FREDDY: Did you perchance call for a psychiatrist?

JUDGE: Where did he come from?

COURT REPORTER: In the script, excuse me, in the records it is written that it is sir Freddy's turn...

JUDGE: Your esteemed name...?

FREDDY: Freddy...

JUDGE: Expert in...?

COURT REPORTER: ... the human head or its nature...?

JUDGE: Well, very graphically put...

COURT REPORTER: Do you swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth?

FREDDY: I swear of course... What shall we discuss?

COURT REPORTER: Evil and human nature...!

FREDDY: ... which is readily corrupted!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Who's fault is this?

FREDDY: This is why when evil transpires man's little head too often the blame acquires...

DEVIL: So, so, do continue with the show...!

FREDDY: A human person reacts in quite a complex way!

JUDGE: Particularly towards evil...

FREDDY: Dear sir, it is exactly so...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Well, how is it now with this human person...

FREDDY: In human subconsciousness all is reflected...

DEVIL: Even the devil's image is not rejected...

FREDDY: True, the comparison is quite grave...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Whose grave?

FREDDY: Not whose but what? Grave, gravely...

DEVIL: We are interested in one level, the Devil. And devil is...

FREDDY: that when evil transpires man himself the blame acquires!!!

DEVIL: How nicely narrated...!

FREDDY: But evil can also be determined...

DEVIL: Well, have you heard this stated...?

JUDGE: Something is fishy here! *To himself.*

COURT REPORTER: Excuse me, this escaped me!

JUDGE: But you are an official after all...!

COURT REPORTER (*quietly*): I meant to say it has not been recorded!

DEVIL: What, is the matter being tailored again?

JUDGE (*overhears*): Do continue, sir!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: What do you mean determined?

FREDDY: Genetics...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: DNA?

FREDDY: Blood picture...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Well, well... That a man can be corrupted born? That means that evil prediction is no fiction... *Watches the judge.*

FREDDY: You could say so, but the factor of environment must be seen...

DEVIL: Environment, factor, what screen?

FREDDY: Factor, not screen...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: I do apologise, my client is on tenterhooks which is why his nerves are keen... Environment, what do you mean by this?

DEVIL: Probably all that is created...? Determinism, sexual deviation... *Judge examines his fingers.*

JUDGE: Court reporter, could you take the time to look at what is underneath my fingernail? A person of my age cannot see clearly on this stage!

COURT REPORTER: At once, your Grace! *Starts examining his fingers.*

DEVIL: What is this now, that God should bite his nails?

JUDGE *(To the court reporter)*: Has all this been entered in the records?

COURT REPORTER: As you ordered, everything to the last bit.

JUDGE: Oh, the devil!

COURT REPORTER: Your Honour will forgive my vice, but I too have problems with my eyes!

JUDGE *(to solicitor Da Vino)*: Perchance you see better, dear sir? *Solicitor Da Vino has in the meanwhile fallen asleep from all the alcohol. Fairly intoxicated he approaches the judge.*

SOLICITOR DA VINO *(looks at the judge's fingers)*: Quite trying this matter!

JUDGE: Stop, can you not see, I am biting my nails!

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Indeed, all is black, I am starting to lose my faith...

JUDGE: Servant of God...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: Your Honour will forgive me, but I the splinter cannot see ...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Where there is law there is no mercy!

JUDGE: Dear sir Da Vino, the witness is yours...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: My lips are sealed... *Returns to his bench and goes back to sleep.*

DEVIL: The faith in God is shaken...

JUDGE: Quiet, I am still the supreme judge...

DEVIL: Who am I to judge the Lord...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: If all is determined, then human freedom is only an illusion to make life easier for man.

DEVIL: And the fault for evil...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE (*to himself*): I am afraid it really is not devil's matter...

FREDDY: What about the witness?

JUDGE: Let him leave the hearing. What is the meaning of such insolence raw to burden human head with false law!

FREDDY (*at the door*): I know nothing of the law. Your Honour will forgive me... To me only the truth is sacred ...

JUDGE: Truth is not a matter of this world!

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: What will people think!

JUDGE: Any more witnesses?!

COURT REPORTER (*goes through the list*): Sir, nichts...

JUDGE: Give it here. *He also goes through the list and writes something down.* Ah, sir Nichts! *Returns the list to the Court reporter.*

COURT REPORTER: Your Lordship...

JUDGE: Show me the records... *He shows them.* ... well, what does the writer of this text write here, comma, Nichts with a capital letter... Well, where is the esteemed gentleman...

SIR NICHTS: Here, Your Grace...

JUDGE: Always at the right time...

SIR NICHTS: Always at your service...

COURT REPORTER: Oath?

JUDGE: No need with this gentleman...

SIR NICHTS: What is today the subject...

JUDGE: Just the thing for you, esteemed person...

SIR NICHTS (*amazed*): Whence these kind words today...

JUDGE: For you one can always find some, my dear sir...

SIR NICHTS: If my memory serves me correctly, it has not always been so...

JUDGE: Bah, let us leave this aside for now... I am more interested in your theory of necessity... wherein the will to power is established...

SIR NICHTS: Who am I to...

JUDGE: A most esteemed member of human community... who gives the present a new dimension of eternity...

DEVIL: And what has that to do with me...

JUDGE: This gentlemen's thesis does away with the distinction between good and evil...

SIR NICHTS: ... if there is eternal recurrence, then this is a religion without hell. For anything that recurs forever is neither good nor bad but only innocently created. It is a religion of the world and being as they are!

JUDGE: Nicely put, indeed...

SIR NICHTS: How now, from your mouth...?

JUDGE: For God nothing is impossible...

DEVIL: And the Devil...?

SIR NICHTS: Where there is no hell, there is no devil...

DEVIL: But man does here on earth still ache...

SIR NICHTS: If he has no will to increase his power stake, man does ache, because he constantly desires something...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: But it is inhuman, not to desire anything...

SIR NICHTS: Not inhuman but superhuman... Man is something to be overcome...

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Your Honour, this is the decay of everything...

JUDGE: Nihilism lies...

SIR NICHTS: ... in denying will to power.

SOLICITOR DA VINO (*wakes, still drunk*): So there is no God?

SIR NICHTS: He is, beyond good and evil...

JUDGE: ... because the two are not...

DEVIL: And the devil?

SIR NICHTS: Lies in God...

SOLICITOR DA VINO (*drunkenly*): And the truth...?

SIR NICHTS: A mere illusion with which a man creates his own delusion...

DEVIL: And the fault for evil...

JUDGE: Is it the Lord's...?

SIR NICHTS: All is becoming and recurrence... No other world persists besides the created one that exists...

JUDGE: Nicely put...

DEVIL: And the paradise's parable?

SIR NICHTS: For a child that is unbearable...

SOLICITOR DA VINO: And the purpose of it all?

SIR NICHTS: Art, the orgy of life...

JUDGE: The chaos of eternity...

SIR NICHTS: Therefore let people be merry and drown their sorrows in play...

SOLICITOR DA VINO (*amazed*): Play is the meaning of all life?

SIR NICHTS: In all its purity it tends towards the origin...

DEVIL: Beyond good and evil, ...

DEVIL'S ADVOCAT: ... where man again seems bound to all reality...

JUDGE: ... there, where good and evil...

SOLICITOR DA VINO (*cheerfully*): ... go hand in hand...

DEVIL: ... where the Devil finds his wings again...

JUDGE: ... and God his long-lost son...

Enter Marilyn.

MARILYN: Where every woman is in need of whipping...

SIR NICHT: ... so that a man's persuasion can be gripping.

JUDGE: There stand the judge...

DEVIL: ... and judged...

SOLICITOR DA VINO (*cross-eyed*): ... the same person...

COURT REPORTER (*shakes his head*): ... that corruption is more easily overlooked!

JUDGE: Whoever plays, suffers. And if our suffering was to your pleasure, then in this play we also were at leisure. If ever in the future you should feel diabolical, then just recall that evil but in a play is comical. Therefore dear jury do not judge us harshly so, because the meaning of all life is in the part of woe. *Bangs the gavel and closes the proceedings.*

COURT REPORTER (*admonishingly*): Excuse me, Your Grace, but shouldn't there be plural in the last line!

JUDGE (*authoritatively*): No, for it would screw up my rhyme...

THE END