



THE PEOPLE

VS.

MR. DRYSDALE (PERSON)
AND CLEOPATRA DRYSDALE (MONKEY)

CLOSING ARGUMENT: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, the DEFENSE has shown that when Officer McElroy gave Mr. Drysdale a TICKET for UNSAFE DRIVING, this was NOT FAIR because:

- (i) Mr. Drysdale was not breaking any laws.
- (ii) Luthor Drysdale (dog) was hanging his head out the window, which every dog does.
- (iii) Everyone in Cedarville knows that Cleopatra always rides on the back of Luthor's neck, whether driving in a car or not.

Officer McElroy claims that Cleopatra could have fallen off, creating a TRAFFIC HAZARD. However, the defense has proven that capuchin monkeys are excellent GRIPPERS and have been hanging off of tree branches, dogs' necks, etc. for THOUSANDS of YEARS. We therefore ask you, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, to return a verdict of NOT GUILTY so Mr. Drysdale won't have to pay the fifty-dollar fine.

Ben Slovak looked up from the paper. "Do they have juries in traffic court?"

"Okay, I'll change it to 'Your Honor.'" Griffin Bing was impatient. "What about the reasoning? Perfect, right?"

Ben wanted to agree with Griffin. Life was so much smoother when you did.

"I guess so," he said uncertainly. "But wouldn't it be easier just to pay the ticket?"

"Never!" Griffin thundered. "There can't possibly be a law against driving around with a monkey piggybacking your dog! The whole

thing comes down to that cop saying it isn't safe. Who do you think knows more about animals — the cop or Savannah?"

No contest there. Their fellow sixth grader Savannah Drysdale was Cedarville's greatest authority on animals. In addition to Cleopatra and Luthor, she was the housemate — she refused to call herself the owner — of cats, rabbits, hamsters, turtles, a parakeet, and an albino chameleon.

Ben looked distracted. "Listen, Griffin, I need to talk to you about something."

"Later," Griffin promised. "I want to get this over to Savannah's. I can't wait to see the look on her face when she reads our plan for her dad's defense."

Wordlessly, Ben followed Griffin down the street and up the Drysdales' front walk. You didn't argue with Griffin when there was a plan involved. In this town, Griffin Bing was The Man With The Plan.

Griffin marched up to the house and rang the bell. Almost instantly, the door was flung open and Savannah burst out onto the porch, eyes wild.

"You've got to help me!" she cried.

Griffin thrust the paper into her hand. "Don't worry, we have a plan."

Savannah stared at the closing argument like it was written in Martian. “What’s this supposed to be?”

“Your father’s defense for the traffic ticket!”

“Are you nuts?” Savannah wailed. “Nobody cares about the ticket! Cleopatra is *gone*!”