

Murphy's Law Retort

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Rated: G

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Summary: This is my retort to "Murphy's Law" by Cookiesmom. When the long arm of the law bothers Superman, it takes a few phone calls, or one really big one, to fix things.

Story Size: 1,290 words (7Kb as text)

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Assistant District Attorney Jane 'the Terror' smirked as she thought how her mother had said she wouldn't enjoy her new job, but it was working out very well. The phone rang. She picked it up. As soon as the voice on the other end said, "This is the—" she recognized the voice and slammed down the phone. That was the third time today and the prank hadn't been funny the first time. Now to spend some time going through some of Metropolis's lesser known laws, seeing which other ones Superman might have run afoul of with out even knowing (since not even a lawyer, only a trivia buff, would know these laws).

Half an hour later, in the middle of checking a statute on use of x-ray machines, that might apply to eyes too, the phone rang. She considered not answering, but the ringing was bothersome so she picked it up. Good thing too, as it was District Attorney Marla Roberts, sort of her boss, although Jane preferred to think of the people of Metropolis as her boss instead.

"Jane?" asked the voice, "do you recognize my voice and know this is me?"

"Yes," answered a confused ADA.

"I've been asked to conference someone in on this call.

Hello, Mayor Spring? Are you there?"

"Yes," came a well-spoken voice. "How are the kids, Marla?"

"Very well, Mayor. Jane? I recognize and identify the Mayor to you."

'That was strange,' thought Jane.

"I've been asked conference someone in on this call," said the Mayor. "Are you there, Governor?"

"I'm here," came a new voice. "Interested in some golf this week, Harvey?"

"Only day with good weather will be Friday. I'll cancel some appointments if the forecast holds. Jane? I identify the Governor of New Troy for you."

"I've been asked to conference someone in," said the Governor. "Hello, Senator Smith?"

"I'm here. If I can get out of Washington on Friday would you like to make it a threesome on the course?"

"Sure. Jane? I identify the senior Senator from New Troy to you."

"Jane?" asked the Senator. "This is Mr. Parson from my staff."

"Hello. Parson here," said still another voice.

"I identify and confirm his identity to you," said the Senator.

"I'm conferencing in Susan. She works in the White House."

"Hi Allen!" said an excited female voice.

Jane wondered where had she heard that voice before.

"Allen, just checking, but how does Jane know you recognize this person and that she works at the White House?" asked the Senator.

"We got engaged last night. I'd better know her, and we met at a White House security check point."

A round of congratulations came from the conference callers.

"Sounds good enough for me, and the caller ID from the security phone says she's calling from work," said the Senator.

"This is Susan Maise, soon to be Parson. I'm an operator at the White house switchboard... This is the White House calling... please hold for the President." There was a funny hum from the phone.

'This is the White House', that's what the prank caller kept saying...

"This is the President," announced a firm voice.

"Of what?" she demanded automatically.

"Of the United States!" snapped the firm voice, sounding a little testy. "...I'm sorry, do you know how many times I've been asked that? It gets old fast. Now, Ms. Assistant District Attorney. About the legal entanglement Superman has been experiencing. I'd like to suggest that it is the DA's office's job to exercise common sense in determining prosecutions. You don't arrest EMTs for transporting people without a hack license, you don't arrest the World Series winning team for littering after a ticker tape parade in their honor, you don't arrest Superman for being a good person, ah alien, ah citizen, ah... good guy."

"Sir, we enforce the law as it is written and we don't bow to threats of force from visiting aliens..."

"Jane, I'm going to conference in the Solicitor General and the head of the Department of Transportation." There were clicks. "Is everyone here now who is supposed to be?"

"Is this the cafeteria?" asked a confused voice.

"Who's that," asked the President.

"Ah, this is second assistant executive undersecretary Waters," (which is the position roughly equivalent to White House dogcatcher since the more adjectives the lower the power) "I was trying to call the White House Cafeteria..."

"You need to dial a 2 first for an internal line," said the President. "Say good bye, hang up and dial again."

"Ah is that a two and then—"

"Say good bye, hang up and dial again, beginning with a 2."

"Thank you. Good-bye. Click."

"Is everyone here who is supposed to be...and no one else?"

A round of here's was heard which was apparently the correct number of answers.

"How much money does Metropolis get from the federal government for highways?"

"About \$900 million," said the head of the DOT.

"And I sign the paper to get them the money," said the president. "What happens if I don't?"

"Ah," said the Solicitor General who represents the Federal government in court, "They sue. We can drag it out in court but they'll eventually win and we have to give them the money then."

"Excuse me," said the Senator, "how long will that take?"

"About 18 months," answered the Solicitor General.

The Senator laughed. "Money not expended in the year appropriated is returned to the treasury. By the time you have to give it to them they'll have to give it back."

"That's 900 million dollars," a voice pointed out to her.

"But why?" she demanded.

"Because people like him!" responded the President. "His approval polls are incredible. If we added the President's, the Senator's and the Mayor's approval numbers, and the number 3, together we'd still be a point behind his polls."

"Really?" asked a voice; it didn't matter whose.

"The Mayor had a crime wave and a nuclear reactor leak, the Governor had a scandal with a woman not his wife and I've got an economy in the tank. Yes, he's actually 4 percent higher than all our numbers added together, and adding them is irrational."

"If I may," said the Senator's aide. "I've seen those polls."

90% of the people think Superman is the greatest thing since George Washington invented sliced bread. The other 10% think he's here to invade but 5% say he's the nicest invader we've ever had and just over 1% think he's here to invade and he's so nice we should surrender because he'd do a better job of running things."

"There are some real nuts out there," commented Jane.

"Those 'nuts' vote."

"They're still nuts."

"Those nuts vote for me," declared her boss. "When it comes to Superman prosecution, clean up or clean out... your desk. 900 million dollars and 90% of the electorate say he's not to be charged with any more obscure laws that we haven't enforced for years."

"Yes."

"Yes what, Ms. Trask?"

"Yes sir."

THE END