SUPREME COURT OF THE FICTIONAL COMMONWEALTH

No. 1948-7

In re Assignment of the Toon Docket

2 F.C. 30 (1948)

On certification from the Judicial Panel on Multi-Dimensional Litigation · Decided 1948 · Inkwell, C.J., for the Court

Law inspired by Alabama Great Southern Railroad Co. v. Carroll (Ala. 1892) and Goldlawr, Inc. v. Heiman (U.S. 1962).

FICTIONAL LEGAL SATIRE. NOT LEGAL AUTHORITY.

SYLLABUS

After the Reorganization Act created the circuits, the Panel certified the question of how a petitioner is to choose among them, and what follows when the choice is wrong. Held: (1) a petition is filed in the circuit whose physics governed the harm complained of, not the circuit of the parties' home, studio, species or medium; (2) where more than one physics operated, the circuit whose rule decided the outcome of the event has jurisdiction, and the crossing itself, if any, is heard in the Multiversal Circuit; (3) a petition filed in the wrong circuit is not dismissed but transferred to the right one, with its filing date preserved, unless no Commonwealth court could hear it at all; (4) a petitioner who cannot tell which physics governed may file in the Multiversal Circuit, which will assign the case. Certified question answered.

HEADNOTES

[1] 80GAG12(1) · **Courts: Assignment.** Physics of the harm. The circuit is chosen by asking what rule made the injury happen as it did. Where gravity waited, Toon. Where magic bound, Enchanted. Where nothing unusual happened to anyone, Newtonian.

[2] 80GAG12(3) · **Courts: Mixed worlds.** Medium, studio and species are registry tags. Where two physics operated, the rule that decided the outcome controls; the crossing between frames, if it is itself in dispute, is Multiversal.

[3] 80GAG14(2) · **Courts: Wrong circuit.** Transfer, not dismissal. A petition filed in the wrong circuit is transferred in the interest of justice and keeps its filing date. Dismissal is reserved for petitions no Commonwealth court may hear.

[4] 80GAG14(4) · **Courts: Uncertain physics.** A petitioner in genuine doubt may file in the Multiversal Circuit, which assigns rather than decides.

OPINION · INKWELL, C.J., FOR THE COURT

¶ 1 INKWELL, C.J. The Reorganization Act gave this Commonwealth eight circuits and a ninth to hear what falls between them. It did not say how a petitioner is to pick one. The Panel asks us to say. We do so briefly, because the answer is already in the Charter.

I. PHYSICS, NOT PARTIES

¶ 2 Article III makes a world's physics its substantive law. It follows that the court competent to apply that law is the court of that physics. The question for a petitioner is therefore not where the parties live, who drew them, or what they are, but this: what rule made the harm happen as it did? If the petitioner fell and the fall waited for him to notice, the rule was Toon's. If a bargain bound because it was spoken over a cauldron, the rule was Enchanted's. If a stapler was set in gelatin and nothing more remarkable occurred, the rule was Newtonian's, which is to say no rule at all beyond the ordinary ones.

II. MIXED WORLDS

¶ 3 Many worlds are mixed. A hero drawn in ink may fight under Metropolitan rules in a city that obeys ordinary gravity. The medium is not the physics. Where two physics operated on the same event, the petitioner asks which one decided the outcome, and files there. Where the dispute is about the crossing itself, the portal, the collision of frames, the machine that moved the parties, the Multiversal Circuit hears that question and that question only. A petitioner may be in both courts at once. This is not a hardship; it is the ordinary condition of anyone who has been somewhere else.

III. THE WRONG CIRCUIT

¶ 4 Petitioners will sometimes choose wrong. The Panel asks whether the remedy is dismissal or transfer. We hold it is transfer. A petitioner who has brought a real grievance about an unreal event to a court of this Commonwealth has done the hard part. The Clerk will send the petition to the circuit whose physics governed, the filing date will stand, and the receiving court will proceed as if the petition had been filed there. Dismissal is for the petition that no court of this Commonwealth may hear: the one about a real person, a real company, or a real dispute. Those are not misfiled. They are not ours.

IV. WHEN THE PETITIONER CANNOT KNOW

¶ 5 Finally, a petitioner may not know. The physics of a world is sometimes the very thing in dispute, and sometimes it is simply unclear until the last reel. Such a petitioner may file in the Multiversal Circuit and say so. That court will assign the case rather than decide it, and no one will be penalized for honesty about gravity.

¶ 6 The certified question is answered. The Clerk is directed to publish this opinion beneath the circuit selection on every petition form, so that no petitioner can say they were not told.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Drafted by machine in the voice of Chief Justice Inkwell. Edited and entered for the Court by A. Marchbanks , a member of the bench and bar.

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