MULTIVERSAL CIRCUIT

No. 2001-MULT-0004

In re Doors of Monsters, Incorporated

44 F.C. App. 210 (Multi. Cir. 2001)

Assignment Panel · Decided 2001 · Interframe, J., for the Panel

Facts inspired by Monsters, Inc. (2001); law inspired by Executive Jet Aviation, Inc. v. City of Cleveland (U.S. 1972).

FICTIONAL LEGAL SATIRE. NOT LEGAL AUTHORITY.

SYLLABUS

A scream-energy utility in Monstropolis, its collectors, a human child who crossed into the monster world through a closet door, and the Desert Revenue Service's successor filed, between them, four petitions and could not agree where. The Clerk referred all four to this Panel. Held: (1) Monstropolis is a world of ordinary physics inhabited by non-human persons; what a party is confers no jurisdiction, and claims arising wholly within it are Newtonian Circuit matters; (2) a scare performed in a human child's bedroom is governed by the physics of the bedroom, which is Newtonian; (3) the door system, being the crossing itself, is Multiversal, and claims about its operation, closure or shredding stay here; (4) the Shadow Circuit does not take a case because its parties are frightening; it takes a case because the harm ran on Shadow physics, and nothing in this record did. Petitions assigned.

HEADNOTES

[1] 80GAG12(1) · **Courts: Assignment.** Species is not physics. What a party is confers no jurisdiction. A world of monsters, robots or talking animals in which gravity, commerce and injury behave ordinarily is a Newtonian world. In re Assignment of the Toon Docket , 2 F.C. 30 (1948), applied.

[2] 80GAG12(5) · **Courts: Shadow Circuit.** Fright is not jurisdiction. The Shadow Circuit hears harms that ran on Shadow physics: hauntings, the undead, curses that operate by night. A scare inflicted by an employee on a schedule is Newtonian, however large the employee.

[3] 80GAG12(3) · **Courts: The crossing is Multiversal.** A door that opens onto another world is the crossing. Claims about the door stay in the Multiversal Circuit; claims about what happened on either side go to the side's circuit.

[4] 80GAG12(7) · **Courts: Forum statement.** Every opinion whose assignment was in doubt shall open with a short statement of the forum analysis, so that later courts may rely on the assignment without relitigating it.

OPINION · INTERFRAME, J., FOR THE PANEL

¶ 1 INTERFRAME, J. Four petitions, one city, one closet. A utility that powers Monstropolis by collecting the screams of human children sues its revenue authority over the taxation of that energy. Two of its collectors sue the utility over the shredding of a door. A child sues everyone. The Clerk could not place any of it and sent all of it here. Our task is not to decide these cases. It is to say where they go.

I. THE SHADOW CIRCUIT IS NOT THE FORUM

¶ 2 The petitioners' first instinct was the Shadow Circuit, on the ground that the parties are monsters and the business is fright. That instinct is understandable but wrong. In re Assignment of the Toon Docket , 2 F.C. 30 (1948), asks what rule made the harm happen as it did. The Shadow Circuit's rule is that the night has its own physics: the dead walk, curses bind, the house remembers. Nothing in Monstropolis works that way. Its monsters commute. They clock in, wear hard hats, file expense reports, and are injured by ordinary means. A world in which a large furry person can be deflated by a child's laugh is unusual in its inhabitants and ordinary in its physics. What a party is confers no jurisdiction; what the world does to a party does. Charter art. I, § 2. The Newtonian Circuit takes the city.

II. THE SCARES

¶ 3 The scares themselves occurred in human bedrooms. A bedroom in a human suburb runs on Newtonian physics whether or not something is standing in the closet. The child's claims against the collectors arise there and are Newtonian matters, to be heard in the North Suburban District, which has experience with intruders. Murchins v. McCallister , 33 F.C. App. 410 (Newt. Cir. 1990).

III. THE DOORS

¶ 4 The doors are different. A door that opens from a factory floor onto a bedroom a universe away is the crossing, and the crossing is ours. Claims about the door system, its activation, its closure, and the shredding of a particular door remain in this Circuit. We note, without deciding, that the shredding of a door through which a person has passed may raise the question whether a crossing can be destroyed while someone is still on the far side of it. Charter art. V, § 1. That question stays here.

IV. THE TAX PETITION

¶ 5 The tax petition goes to the Tax Division of the Newtonian Circuit. Scream energy is collected on one side of the door and metered on the other, but the income is earned, booked and taxed in Monstropolis, and the utility's revenue authority sits there. Where the income is earned under ordinary physics, the Tax Division of the ordinary circuit hears the refund suit. The Division may consult the Toon Circuit's tax cases on the deductibility of equipment that fails on every use, Coyote v. Desert Revenue Service , 3 F.C. Tax 45 (Toon Cir. 1956), but is not bound by them; a scream canister is not an anvil.

V. A RULE OF PRACTICE

¶ 6 We add a rule of practice. These petitions were filed in three circuits and this one before the Clerk intervened, and each filing argued jurisdiction at length. Going forward, every opinion whose assignment was ever in doubt shall begin with a short forum statement: the world, the physics that governed the harm, the circuit, and the authority for the assignment. Later courts may rely on that statement without relitigating it. The Clerk is directed to add the statement to the opinion template.

¶ 7 Petitions assigned as stated. The door petitions are retained. It is so ordered.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Drafted by machine in the voice of Judge Interframe. Edited and entered for the Panel by C. Caesura , a member of the bench and bar.

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