

TWO CASES OF ABUSE
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Case #1

It happened during a tour of the Metropolitan Museum of Art – of all places. I stood at the back of the tour group because I don't like feeling engulfed in a crowd. Our first stop was the Cantor Sculpture Gallery. The tour guide addressed us. She presented a brief biography of Auguste Rodin and went on to elaborate on how Rodin developed his technique and created his works.

When the guide stopped us in front of *The Kiss* the man right in front of me backed up a step. That forced me back. It was then that I felt a hand pressing against me from behind. At first, I wasn't sure if it were deliberate, but when it not only persisted but groped me as I slid to the side, there was no doubt. It was a cold, unfeeling hand, that would neither let go nor waver. It invaded the most private parts of my being. Oh, how that hand probed me, exposing my deepest secrets.

This was not the first time I had been assailed by an aggressive, hostile man. You could imagine how abused and victimized I felt. I was humiliated, irate, and for the moment, paralyzed. Who would have the gall to do such a thing in such a place and think he could get away with it?

As I gathered up my courage I prepared what I would say and do. When I had my act together, I screamed out, "Get your ugly paw off of me. I'll show you, you pervert." As the crowd turned to see what the disturbance was all about, I clenched my fist, whirled around to smash the pervert's ugly face in, but fortune held my hand as I eyed my assailant.

He was none other than *The Thinker*. I had backed into his outstretched wrist.

The guide asked me if I wanted to press charges. She said she would gladly serve as a witness and would see if some of the other tourists would add their testimonies.

Case #2
(Inspired by Mark Twain)

"And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had made; and He *was arrested* on the seventh day from his labors"

Eve had filed a charge of harassment and physical and mental abuse, sued for damages, and the case was brought before the Court.

Eve wailed, "Can you imagine! In the very act of creating me, HE exposed me and penetrated my private parts. I could feel all, but HE rendered me motionless and helpless. It was disgusting. I watched transfixed as HIS serpent slithered toward me. I would swear that it smiled at me."

The Judge was perplexed. This was a case without precedent. (At that time everything was.) Furthermore, not only was he unable to convene a jury, he could not find an attorney for either plaintiff or defendant. The Judge would have to do it all.

The Judge addressed the plaintiff first. "Please describe in detail all that happened and how you felt about it at the time."

Eve responded. "I must confess, it was amazing. Imagine waking for the first time. A flood of new sensations overwhelmed me. Then I began to feel everything. I was exhilarated. HIS hand was everywhere, enveloping me in joyous warmth. Then, last of all, HE fashioned my mind. Oh, pity - that allowed, indeed, forced me to reflect on all that had transpired. It was then that I realized I had been taken advantage of, abused, violated, and invaded without my consent. You can imagine how humiliated I felt and how irate I was at HIS gall."

The Judge next turned to the defendant and addressed HIM. "YOU have heard plaintiff's testimony and the charges. What say YOU? Mount YOUR defense!"

"The plaintiff is justified. All creation requires intimate caress, and this is a case of Optimal Creation Design. I created and designed Man and Woman as uneasy allies whose unions will produce variations that allow the species to survive and thrive. Each will be a succor and a joy but also a torment to the other. As the physically weaker but more durable sex, Woman's strengths lie in her instinct to be coy and her intelligence to complain and to play the victim. These features will bind the stronger but less subtle Man to her so that her needs will be met. Naturally, once I gave Eve her mind she realized MY intimate work of creating her was performed without her consent. In Eve's eyes I AM surely guilty as charged."

"If I understand YOU correctly, YOU have designed humans so that they are independent creatures who can stand on their own and who therefore no longer have any need of YOU."

"That is correct."

"Then", said the Judge, "Here is my verdict. Given humans have no further need of YOU, I banish YOU from them and from the earthly paradise you have created for them for all time. YOU are never to be seen, heard, felt, or sensed in any way by them. Humans, on the other hand, will be condemned to feel displaced and to imagine, think, and preach about their fabrications of YOU endlessly and compulsively. They will do so with fervor and arrogant certainty, but never with a scintilla of knowledge. They will fabricate competing systems of fairy tales, rules, and punishments called religions. They will use their baseless, conflicting fantasies to constrict and censor thoughts, foment divisiveness and hatred, commit murder, wage war, and slaughter and

incinerate each other. And even after performing the most unimaginably horrid deeds they will be able, indeed be designed to construct rationalizations that justify their actions. On the good side, they will be armed with relentless curiosity and creativity, so that they can solve any problem. And thus, will they fare forward, all on their own.”

“That is the optimal verdict. I accept banishment from Paradise. The irony is that from this time on, all adult humankind will feel as if they are the ones who were banished from Paradise, and that I was the one who banished them.”