

**CHERIE CRAGGS, ACE ATTORNEY**

by

Andrew Meyers

Andrew Meyers  
[Andrewmeyers1212@gmail.com](mailto:Andrewmeyers1212@gmail.com)  
425-923-9400  
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### **CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS**

- ALAN MARTIN – Late twenties, early thirties.
- CHERIE CRAGGS – Early forties, Lawyer.
- TODD MARSHALL – Early twenties, Cherie's assistant.

### **SETTING**

**TIME:** 3:30 PM, Wednesday afternoon.

**PLACE:** Ms. Craggs' office, Kenosha, Wisconsin.

CHERIE sits alone at her desk, filling out paper work. ALAN throws the door open and sits in a chair across the table from CHERIE. Silence.

I got hit by a bus.

ALAN

Silence.

And you might be?

CHERIE

I'm Alan Martin. I got hit by a bus.

ALAN

How can I help you, Alan?

CHERIE

I got hit by a BUS.

ALAN

So you've said repeatedly, Mr. Martin, but that's not what I asked you. How can I help you?

CHERIE

You're a lawyer, right? Cherie Craggs?

ALAN

Yes.

CHERIE

Well then you can sue the city for me.

ALAN

You know my reputation?

CHERIE

Why do you think I came to you?

ALAN

And non-coincidentally, my rates are-

CHERIE

A drop in the bucket compared to what I'm gonna make from the city when you win my case.

ALAN

CHERIE

I simply adore your enthusiasm, Mr. Martin. I have a feeling we're going to do great things together.

ALAN

Me too. How do we get this whole thing started?

CHERIE

We need to establish a record of what happened, catalogue your injuries, then assess the damages financially. (yelling offstage) TODD! Mr. Martin needs a report taken!

TODD enters, holding a notepad and a pen.

CHERIE

This is Todd, my personal assistant. We've handled many of these cases together.

ALAN

Hello Todd.

TODD

Hello Mr. Martin. Beautiful day we're having, isn't it? I thought of having a potluck picnic. It was supposed to be my day off, but Cherie made me come in today.

CHERIE

Please Todd, that picnic would have been pathetic, you have two friends.

TODD

I have more than two-

CHERIE

Anytime now, Alan, tell us what happened.

ALAN

I was walking down main street at about two.

CHERIE

You can't win a case with abouts and maybes, Alan. When exactly was this?

ALAN

Ten past two. I was walking down main street-

CHERIE

Which cross street?

ALAN

Fourth. I was on the corner, and I start to walk. The bus was coming to a stop, but it bumped me.

CHERIE stares at ALAN. Silence.

CHERIE

And?

ALAN

That's it.

CHERIE

Did you have the right of way?

ALAN

Pedestrians always have right of way.

CHERIE

That's not true, but we'll get into that later. Did you have the signal to walk?

ALAN

Well... not exactly.

CHERIE

Alan, the fine people of the jury expect a tragic tale of trauma and gore. They don't care if you got nudged while jay walking. Here's what you say. Thinking you were safe to walk, you took a fateful step onto the street. Then, out of nowhere, Auto-terrorism struck! You were slammed by a city bus. Your life flashed before your eyes. Your losses, triumphs, and romances that had yet to be realized. You fell to the ground, a shattered woman, tears welling in your soft brown eyes-

ALAN

I have blue eyes.

CHERIE

Brown eyes are more sympathetic, darling. We can get you colored contacts.

ALAN

...Okay?

CHERIE

You confronted the driver, I'm sure.

ALAN

Yeah, he stepped out of the bus, and he seemed worried about me, but I told him that he had to watch out for people! I told him that I was gonna sue the city.

CHERIE

What shoes did he have on?

ALAN

I don't remember.

TODD gasps.

CHERIE

Alan! You got hit by a bus, and you don't even remember what the driver was wearing? Do you want to lose this case?

TODD

Seems like he does.

CHERIE

Shut it, Todd.

ALAN

It's not that big of a deal Cherie-

CHERIE

Excuse me, how many cases have you won in a court of law?

ALAN

I'm sorry-

CHERIE

Yeah, you'd better be. I've won over seventy cases based solely on what drivers were wearing in collision cases. (to TODD) We'll say he had on crocs. Judge MacArthur hates crocs.

TODD

He should. They're gaudy. I don't understand how any self-respecting person can own something so disgusting.

CHERIE

I own crocs, Todd.

TODD

And Cherie, I say this with all the love I have for you, those crocs are the worst part of who you are.

CHERIE

Well forgive me for wanting to be comfortable sometimes.

TODD

There are shoes that are comfortable that don't make you look like a poor mickey mouse. You slay in court, there's no reason you can't buy a pair of slippers.

CHERIE

You can't wear slippers to the super market, Todd! Crocs are where comfort meets utility, they're the optimal footwear.

TODD

Ugh, you sound like a suburban plumber.

CHERIE

You take that back!

TODD

Only when you take back those crocs.

CHERIE

You know my Nordstrom Rack has a no return policy on footwear, Todd. We were there last weekend!

TODD

Mhm.

ALAN

Uh, hi, I'm sorry. Maybe I wasn't clear, I don't know what the driver was wearing.

CHERIE

No, Alan, you were very clear.

ALAN

So... I'm sorry, I don't know where you got crocs from.

TODD

She got them from the Nordstrom Rack.

CHERIE

Todd, I swear-

ALAN

What I mean is-

CHERIE

Let me save you some time, Mr. Martin. Judge MacArthur presides over more cases in Kenosha than any other judge. He hates crocs, makes this face whenever anyone so much as mentions them. Scrunches his whole...everything.

CHERIE imitates what this might look like.

CHERIE

So we're saying that the driver was wearing crocs. Get it?

ALAN

That sounds... sketchy.

CHERIE

Good lord. Alan, listen to me. I know how to win cases. It's what I do, all right? Let me do what I do.

ALAN

You mean you lie in all your cases?

CHERIE

Todd, this man is a moron.

ALAN

Hey, that's not very nice.

CHERIE

Well you're not very smart. I'd suggest you find another lawyer if you're uncomfortable, but if you leave now, your invoice would be a total of-

CHERIE checks her watch.

CHERIE

One hundred, twenty-five dollars and sixty-seven cents.

ALAN

A hundred and twenty-five dollars?

CHERIE

And sixty-seven cents.

ALAN

We've been here for five minutes!

TODD

Cherie's the best there is.



CHERIE

I wouldn't worry about it, Mr. Martin. When we win, you won't owe me a penny. That is... if you let me stay on your case.

Silence.

ALAN

I mean... I guess I have to, right? –

CHERIE

That's the spirit, Alan.

ALAN

One question though?

CHERIE

Good God. Yes?

ALAN

How do you sleep at night?

CHERIE

Excuse me?

ALAN

You're rigging cases! You're robbing people of justice, and all for... what, money? You are what's wrong with America.

CHERIE

Really? I, the Lawyer in southern Wisconsin, am what's wrong with America?

ALAN

You and people like you, yes. You're willing to bend the truth-

CHERIE

I'm willing to do what it takes to get justice for the people who can't fight for it themselves. Do you know what would happen if you went up against the city by yourself? They'd deny everything. You'd be ground to a pulp by their lawyers. They'd say that YOU were the one wearing crocs, Alan.

TODD

Do you want to have an official transcript saying that you were wearing crocs?

ALAN

I don't care if people think I was wearing crocs.

CHERIE

You know who would care? Judge MacArthur. Your case would be thrown out in a second, and the city would countersue you for slander. You'd find yourself penniless, all because you wanted to "play fair" with lawyers. You know what though? Go for it. You probably do everything by the book, don't you? You're right, Alan, I never should have suggested that you fib, shame on me. So what's the truth then? You walked into the immediate path of a bus while jay walking and it came into your general vicinity, so you think you're entitled to financial compensation?

ALAN

...Yeah okay we should do it your way.

CHERIE

Good to be on the same page. Time to catalogue your injuries, Mr. Martin. Show us all of your visible bruising, bleeding, compound fractures, everything.

ALAN

I don't have any of that. What about emotional damage?

CHERIE

I'm afraid a jury doesn't connect well enough to emotional damage. We need to see your injuries, otherwise this whole thing is a bust. Todd, please get the hammer of justice.

TODD exits. TODD re-enters with a hammer.

CHERIE

Now, Mr. Martin, go ahead and put your foot on the desk. Todd, I think a broken ankle should get enough sympathy here.

ALAN

I don't think so, you people are crazy.

CHERIE

Yeah, crazy good at winning court cases.

CHERIE and TODD high-five.

ALAN

No way. I'm leaving.

CHERIE

Alan, what about justice? You're the victim of attempted vehicular manslaughter!

ALAN

There's no such thing as attempted vehicular manslaughter!

CHERIE extends her arm towards ALAN.

CHERIE

Come with me, Alan. Together we can win the first ever case of attempted vehicular manslaughter. Todd and I have worked fervently for the past eight minutes to make sure that you get the legal representation that you deserve. Meet us halfway, please.

ALAN Exits.

CHERIE

Your invoice will be in the mail!

Silence.

CHERIE

Did I come on too strong?

TODD

I think he was afraid of your power.

CHERIE

You're such a kiss-ass.

TODD

Only for you, Cherie.

CHERIE

And I appreciate that, Todd. I'm sorry I made you cancel your potluck.

TODD

No you're not.

CHERIE

Well no, but it's what people say. It's polite.

TODD

Polite doesn't suit you.

CHERIE

Oh, go to hell.

TODD

Much better.

Silence.

CHERIE

Well, you know what to do, Todd. Tell me what happened.

TODD

(Reading from notes)

I was crossing the street at Main and Fourth. I thought I was safe, until out of nowhere, Auto-terrorism struck.

TODD hands CHERIE the hammer and puts his foot on the desk.

Blackout

End of play