

JUDGE ROY BEAN
(8 page short story, full color)

written by David Hopkins

SYNOPSIS: An out-of-towner is dragged into Judge Bean's saloon for an unspecified crime. Judge Bean finishes his drink, pulls out his gun. The out-of-towner flinches. Judge Bean uses the butt of the gun as a gavel, hits the bar twice, and calls court in session for Precinct 6, Pecos County, great state of Texas. The trial is completely absurd. Judge Bean makes a ruling, charging him with "temerity" and "lollygagging," punishable by hanging. The out-of-towner begs for his life. Judge Bean considers this and asks how much money the out-of-towner has. \$2. His charge is now \$2. The out-of-towner pays and leaves the saloon. A free man. After the out-of-towner leaves, the regulars are smug. Judge Bean says, "The day is almost wasted. Bring in the next one."

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:

JUDGE ROY BEAN - I'd like him to look as close to the historical figure as possible. Here's a photo reference http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judge_Roy_Bean

OUT OF TOWNER - An Irishmen looking for his fortune in the West. He's clean cut, wet dark hair parted firmly down the middle. He has baggy pants, white button-up shirt, and suspenders. He clearly doesn't belong west of the Pecos. With each page, he needs to become progressively more and more beaten down, wild-eyed.

PROSECUTOR - A grizzled cowboy and a regular at the bar, he's skin and bones, unshaven and dirty. Deep-sunk eyes. He's either five more drinks or five fewer meals away from dying.

DEFENSE LAWYER - A younger rough neck, menacing, missing a front tooth, long greasy hair under his beaten dusty bowler hat.

PAGE ONE

PANEL 1. An exterior establishing shot of Judge Bean's bar in Langtry, Texas. I'd like it to closely resemble the historical location. Thank you, Wikipedia. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Old_langtry_tx.jpg). Three horses are tied to the front post. There's a few cowboys sitting on the front porch.

PANEL 2. Interior of the saloon. It's a humble bar, only a few tables, and a framed portrait of Lillie Langtry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Lillie_Langtry_by_Millais.jpg) behind the bar. JUDGE ROY BEAN stands behind the bar, with a bottle and a shot glass. The PROSECUTOR and DEFENSE LAWYER drag the OUT OF TOWNER to the bar, their backs to the reader.

DEFENSE LAWYER

We've got one ready to stand trial.

JUDGE ROY BEAN

Bring him here.

PANEL 3. The OUT OF TOWNER is slammed against the bar.

PANEL 4. The OUT OF TOWNER looks up at JUDGE ROY BEAN.

OUT OF TOWNER

I don't even know what they think I did, but I didn't do it.

JUDGE ROY BEAN

I guess we're here to sort the truth and administer justice.

PAGE TWO

PANEL 1. JUDGE ROY BEAN takes a deep drink from his shot glass.

PANEL 2. Close on empty shot glass as he slams it down with his stubby fingers.

PANEL 3. JUDGE ROY BEAN pulls out a revolver. Specifically, it's a Colt Single Action Army handgun (aka Colt Peacemaker).

JUDGE ROY BEAN
Let's proceed.

PANEL 4. The OUT OF TOWNER flinches at the gun, blocking his face with his forearms.

OUT OF TOWNER
Oh god!

PANEL 5. JUDGE ROY BEAN, still holding it normally, slams the butt of gun on the bar -- acting as a *de facto* gavel.

SFX
Thump! Thump!

PANEL 6. JUDGE ROY BEAN speaks.

JUDGE ROY BEAN
I, the honorable Judge Roy Bean,
hereby call court in session for
Precinct 6, Pecos County, great
state of Texas and in respect to
Miss Lillie Langtry. God bless her
and delivery her to me. Amen.

PANEL 7. The DEFENSE LAWYER and PROSECUTOR stand on either side of the OUT OF TOWNER. They solemnly respond. The OUT OF TOWNER is bewildered. What is going on?

PROSECUTOR
Amen. Miss Langtry.

DEFENSE LAWYER
Fine woman.

PAGE THREE

PANEL 1. JUDGE ROY BEAN points to the DEFENSE LAWYER.

JUDGE ROY BEAN
Defense, I'll start with you this
time.

DEFENSE LAWYER
Yes, your honor.

PANEL 2. With a bullying snarl, DEFENSE LAWYER stares at the
OUT OF TOWNER.

DEFENSE LAWYER
You said you didn't do what we
thought you did. Can you prove it?

OUT OF TOWNER
But- but- I don't know what it is.

DEFENSE LAWYER
And yet, you seem so confident
about what you don't know. Do you
have an eye witness to what wasn't
done?

PANEL 3. Defense Lawyer's POV. Close on OUT OF TOWNER. He's
wide eyed and completely dumbfounded.

OUT OF TOWNER
I don't know?

PANEL 4. The DEFENSE LAWYER rubs his chin to ponder this
information.

DEFENSE LAWYER
You don't know.

PANEL 5. Wack! The DEFENSE LAWYER slaps the OUT OF TOWNER
hard across the face.

DEFENSE LAWYER
Dammit! I'm trying to help you!

PAGE FOUR

PANEL 1. On JUDGE ROY BEAN. He gives a cock-eyed glare at the DEFENSE ATTORNEY. The OUT OF TOWNER is crying in pain.

JUDGE ROY BEAN
John, he's your client. You don't
slap --

PANEL 2. JUDGE ROY BEAN looks at the OUT OF TOWNER, still crying.

JUDGE ROY BEAN
What's your name, son?

OUT OF TOWNER
Andrew, sir.

PANEL 3. JUDGE ROY BEAN smiles and looks at the DEFENSE LAWYER, also smirks.

JUDGE ROY BEAN
Don't slap Andrew.

DEFENSE LAWYER
Yes, your honor.

PANEL 4. The DEFENSE LAWYER throws his hands up. He doesn't know what else to do for his client.

DEFENSE LAWYER
The defense rests. Can I get a
drink?

PANEL 5. JUDGE ROY BEAN pours a drink for the DEFENSE LAWYER.

DEFENSE LAWYER
Most certainly.

PANEL 6. JUDGE ROY BEAN looks at the PROSECUTOR, while the DEFENSE LAWYER takes a drink. The OUT OF TOWNER looks worried.

JUDGE ROY BEAN
Prosecutor, he's all yours.

PAGE FIVE

PANEL 1. The PROSECUTOR stares at the OUT OF TOWNER. Unlike the animated DEFENSE LAWYER, the PROSECUTOR is completely emotionless and zombie-like.

PROSECUTOR

Uh...

PANEL 2. Same shot.

PROSECUTOR

Do you favor your right or your left?

OUT OF TOWNER

What?

PROSECUTOR

Right or left?

PANEL 3. JUDGE ROY BEAN gestures with his gun/gavel, pointing it at the OUT OF TOWNER.

JUDGE ROY BEAN

Answer the god damn question.

PANEL 4. OUT OF TOWNER looks at the PROSECUTOR.

OUT OF TOWNER

I'm right-handed.

PROSECUTOR

Are you a Methodist?

OUT OF TOWNER

Ma and Pa are Catholic. I ain't been to services in --

PROSECUTOR

Do you know of Miss Langtry?

PANEL 5. OUT OF TOWNER looks nervously at the framed portrait of LILLIE LANGTRY on the bar wall. She's watching over this preceding with a cold glare.

OUT OF TOWNER

The actress? Yes, I know of her.
The Jersey Lily.

PANEL 6. The DEFENSE LAWYER raises his glass.

DEFENSE LAWYER

Fine woman.

PAGE SIX

PANEL 1. The PROSECUTOR looks in the air, trying to think of another question he could ask.

PROSECUTOR
Hmm. Let's see...

PANEL 2. PROSECUTOR points to the worn-down OUT OF TOWNER.

PROSECUTOR
Do you like oranges?

PANEL 3. OUT OF TOWNER is about to lose it. PROSECUTOR is deadpan.

OUT OF TOWNER
I ain't never had an orange.

PROSECUTOR
Not even for Christmas?

OUT OF TOWNER
Not even for Christmas.

PANEL 4. JUDGE BEAN wacks his gun on the bar.

SFX
Thump! Thump! Thump! Thump!

JUDGE ROY BEAN
Okay, I've heard enough. I hereby charge this poor soul with temerity and lollygagging. Punishable by hanging in accordance with the laws of this great state.

PANEL 5. OUT OF TOWNER is desperate and pleas his case.

OUT OF TOWNER
What? Your honor, I didn't temerit nobody! I swear!

PANEL 6. JUDGE BEAN bangs his gun handle against the bar.

SFX
Thump! Thump!

JUDGE ROY BEAN
Order in the court!

PAGE SEVEN

PANEL 1. OUT OF TOWNER begs and begs.

OUT OF TOWNER

I swear to God! Sweet Jesus! I done
no temeriting. I ain't lollygagged.
I'm a good person. Swear to God!

PANEL 2. OUT OF TOWNER cries in his hands.

OUT OF TOWNER

I'm a good person.

PANEL 3. JUDGE ROY BEAN smiles.

JUDGE ROY BEAN

How much money do you have?

PANEL 4. OUT OF TOWNER, full of tears and sweat.

OUT OF TOWNER

Two dollars. I have two dollars.

PANEL 5. JUDGE ROY BEAN holds out his hand.

JUDGE ROY BEAN

Your charge for these crimes is now
two dollars. Pay up, and get the
hell out of my town.

PAGE EIGHT

PANEL 1. The OUT OF TOWNER places two bills in JUDGE ROY BEAN's hand.

PANEL 2. The JUDGE, PROSECUTOR, and DEFENSE LAWYER all watch as the OUT OF TOWNER walks away to leave the bar.

PANEL 3. Close on the JUDGE, PROSECUTOR and DEFENSE LAWYER, all smiles and grins. They watch as the Out of Towner (off panel) leaves.

JUDGE ROY BEAN

Next time, John, stick to the script.

DEFENSE LAWYER

Aw hell. You just can't keep up with my skillful improvisin'.

JUDGE ROY BEAN

Maybe so.

PANEL 4. JUDGE ROY BEAN looks to the side, pensive.

JUDGE ROY BEAN

The day is almost wasted.

PANEL 5. JUDGE ROY BEAN gives a half grin.

JUDGE ROY BEAN

Bring in the next one.

END.