

The Copyright Violation

A Skit by Dwayne Yancey

Selected from his collection, "Skits 24/7"

Cast: 1 m, 1 w, 1 flexible

Length: 4 pages of dialogue (725 words)

Performance time: About 4 minutes

The Story

Alicia's new cartoon tattoo, done on a somewhat private place on her body, violates Mega Studio's copyright. All the studio requires is that she display the tattoo whenever they specify! Characters include the young woman, the attorney, and the "repo" man.

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THE COPYRIGHT VIOLATION

(Two people stand outside a door. One is a well-dressed, no-nonsense LAWYER with a briefcase and a handful of legal papers. The other is a grungy REPO MAN with a threatening look. The lawyer knocks on the door. A YOUNG WOMAN opens it, cautiously.)

ALICIA: *(Warily.)* May I help you?

LAWYER: You're Alicia Johnson?

ALICIA: *(Still wary.)* Yes.

LAWYER: Alicia Lynn Johnson of 2458 Locustcrest Road?

ALICIA: What's going on? Who are you?

LAWYER: *(Handing HER a business card.)* Here's my card. I'm an attorney representing Megamedia Studios, Inc. and —

ALICIA: Oh! Look, I swear I returned that video on time and I paid all the late fees and everything and —

LAWYER: That's not why I'm here.

ALICIA: Then what —

LAWYER: *(Looking at his paperwork.)* Our records show that you recently made a trip to the beach and —

ALICIA: Yes, the Outer Banks. Why?

LAWYER: Where you visited a certain tattoo parlor, hereafter referred to as "The Parlor," where you received a certain tattoo, approximately three centimeters to the left of the —

ALICIA: *(Using her hands to cover her posterior.)* Hey!

LAWYER: Here's the long and short of it: Your tattoo is against the law.

ALICIA: What? What do you mean? I'm over 18. I have a perfectly good right to get a tattoo if I want to.

LAWYER: (*Sighs.*) Paragraph one, section three. "Said tattoo depicts a cartoon character, the rights of which thereto are the exclusive property of Megamedia Studios, Inc.; any reproduction in any form whatsoever is hereby forbidden —"

ALICIA: It's a tattoo!

LAWYER: It's a copyright violation.

ALICIA: What? But nobody can see it. Well, except for my boyfriend and that one guy I met at that party but hey, that's none of your business anyway!

LAWYER: Actually, it is. (*Continuing to read.*) "Any unauthorized use or display of the image of said cartoon character without the express written consent of Megamedia Studios, Inc. is a violation of all applicable federal copyright and trademark laws, and furthermore may constitute a violation of relevant international treaties and trade agreements governing intellectual property —"

ALICIA: It's a cartoon character! It's not intellectual property!

LAWYER: Sorry, ma'am, the law says otherwise. It may be a tattoo for you, but it's a valuable commercial, um, asset for my client. And your use of it is very much unauthorized.

ALICIA: But — but —

LAWYER: No buts about it.

ALICIA: (*Becoming belligerent.*) So what are you going to do about it?

LAWYER: You have two choices.

ALICIA: And they are?

LAWYER: Option one. You can sign this agreement. (*Hands over a thick legal document.*) As you'll see, it requires the licensee — that would be you — to pay a certain annual sum for the use of said character—

ALICIA: (*Reading the contract.*) Good grief!

LAWYER: It also spells out the schedule for residuals —

ALICIA: Ohmigod!

LAWYER: Royalties.

ALICIA: I don't believe this.

LAWYER: — and other miscellaneous fees.

ALICIA: I don't have that kind of money!

LAWYER: You'll also see that the contract governs the use and display of
said character once a license has been granted.

ALICIA: (*Reading.*) What the —!?

LAWYER: Over in sub-section six, it spells out all the things you can and
cannot do —

ALICIA: (*Reading.*) I can't do what?!

LAWYER: I'd suggest you pay particular attention to paragraphs 3 through
30.

ALICIA: (*Reading.*) No way!

LAWYER: May I remind you that any improper use or display of said
character would reflect adversely on the copyright holder —

ALICIA: (*Reading.*) Well, I'd never do that anyway. At least not in public.

LAWYER: — and could potentially diminish the commercial value of the
aforementioned character to Megamedia, its heirs and assigns—

ALICIA: (*Handing the contract back to the LAWYER.*) I'm not signing this.

LAWYER: You're certain?

ALICIA: I mean, it's a stupid cartoon character on my — well, never mind
where it is. I'm not paying you anything. I paid enough to have it done
anyway.

LAWYER: Very well then. Don't say I didn't warn you.

End of Freeview

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