

Lawkward File No. LF-002

Ludicrous Bench, Town of Absurdabad

Date: June 2, 2025

Presiding: Judge Baffelkar

Recorder: Clerk Chintu

Case: Elder Gupta vs. Sandal S-23, Accused of Theft of Honor

On June 2, 2025, the Ludicrous Bench, a courtroom where cobwebs danced with judicial dreams, hummed with the scent of turmeric and village outrage. Judge Baffelkar, his wig sagging like a monsoon-soaked turban, pounded his gavel, cracking a clay pot, as he eyed the defendant: a worn leather sandal, labeled "S-23," propped defiantly in the dock, accused of stealing Elder Gupta's honor by tripping him during Absurdabad's annual Ganesh procession. The fall, villagers claimed, shamed Gupta before the gods, sparking a feud and a curd riot. The gallery, packed with priests, vendors, and a stray mongoose, roared louder than a temple bell, while a goat nibbled Chintu's ink bottle.

"Silence!" Baffelkar thundered, his wig nearly toppling. "This court will not abide footwear felony! Advocate Rantaram, expose this sandal's shame, or I'll banish it to the river!"

Advocate Rantaram, his mustache flailing like a festival flag, swept forward, his coat billowing like a storm. Clutching a parchment titled "Honor's Heist," he boomed, his voice a poetic gale. "My Lord, this sandal, a leathern larcenist, has pilfered Elder Gupta's dignity! On June 1, it tripped him mid-procession, sending him sprawling before Lord Ganesh's idol! I invoke the Sacred Stride Scripture, chanted in my sleep, declaring all sandals must uphold honor or face the pyre!"

The crowd gasped, a priest tossing a marigold that hit a pigeon. Clerk Chintu, his glasses sliding, dropped his ledger, accidentally summoning a temple bell as the plaintiff. "Catastrophe!" Chintu moaned, doodling the bell's "humiliation" in smudged ink.

Judge Baffelkar, stroking his chin like a sage eyeing a dosa, leaned toward S-23. "Sandal, confess your theft! Speak, you sole of scandal!" S-23, silent but scuffed, gleamed with defiance, its strap deemed "sinister" by Rantaram. Baffelkar, unswayed, declared, "Mutism is mockery! I cite the Celestial Honor Code, whispered by the moon, banning footwear from shaming elders!"

Rantaram, basking in chaos, spun a saga of divine disgrace. "S-23 is no mere sandal! It's a dignity-devouring demon! Witnesses saw it shift under Gupta's foot, plotting his fall! The procession halted, curd pots were hurled, and the gods wept! I call the plaintiff, Gupta's Ceremonial Turban, to testify!"

Chintu, quaking, presented the turban, its silk crumpled with shame. The turban, inanimate yet indignant, sparked wails. "My Lord," Rantaram roared, "this turban adorned Gupta's honor! S-23's trip demands its burning and a public apology in verse!" He waved a sandal-string, claiming it as evidence, only to tangle it in his mustache.

The defense, nervous Shyamu, mumbled, "Objection, My Lord! A sandal cannot steal! It lacks motive, will, or a soul!" Baffelkar scoffed, his wig askew. "Souls? This is the Ludicrous Bench, not a shrine! I once fined a mat for disrespect! S-23's scuff screams scandal!"

The gallery surged as a vendor, claiming visions, shouted, "The sandal's possessed!" Chintu, flustered, misread his notes and called the mongoose as a witness. The mongoose, darting smugly, chased a pigeon, sparking a feather-flying frenzy. Rantaram, undeterred, continued. "My Lord, our pandit confirmed S-23's strap aligns with Ketu, the planet of shame! Its trip cost Gupta his priesthood, sparking a curd war! We seek damages in ghee and a new procession!"

Baffelkar, now wielding a broken fan as a scepter, interrogated the turban. "Turban, did S-23 dishonor you?" The turban, silent but sagging, seemed to wilt, prompting cheers. Shyamu, desperate, tried again. "My Lord, Gupta tripped on a stone, not S-23!" Baffelkar laughed, "Stones? I once jailed a pebble for loitering! S-23's strap reeks of theft!"

Chaos erupted when Chintu's ledger caught a spark from a diya, igniting a panic. The mongoose, mistaking the flames for prey, leapt, toppling a vendor's stall. A subplot unfolded as priests, believing S-23's curse, began a purification ritual outside, chanting for Gupta's honor. Rantaram, sensing triumph, added, "This sandal's shame sparked a riot! The curd war cost vendors their stock! We demand S-23's exile to a cobbler's shop!"

Baffelkar, now perched on his bench like a deity, declared, "The gods decree justice! S-23 is guilty of stealing honor and sentenced to adorn a beggar's foot! Gupta's turban shall shine again! Case closed!"

S-23 sat defiantly as it was carted off. The turban was restored, though priests swore it sulked. The mongoose hissed, "Appeal!" as the goat fled. Chintu timestamped the bell's "chime," ensuring the Ludicrous Bench's fame as a judicial circus.