Yokel v. the State of New Mexico:

“Let the record show that you prosecute Harmony Yokel on the basis that he murdered Harlan Boxx the night of August 2nd.” I had a particularly tough case in front of me tonight: Yokel v. the State of New Mexico. It was quite obvious that my client, Harmony Yokel, was responsible for the murder. He had held a grudge on Boxx for years due to some twisted affair and had choked him out in front of several witnesses the night of August 2nd. However, as his public defender, I had sworn to do my best to protect and defend him and by god I would do my best.

Leading up to the court date I had thoroughly studied the Perkins case, but found it unsuitable in this scenario: Yokel killed Boxx with his hands and had clear intent. I would have to find a new line of reasoning. Additionally, I could always invoke the Mickey Mouse paradox, but that would require a great deal of work on my end, work I wasn’t sure I could handle right now. Luckily, I was a skilled artisan in logical persuasion and especially adept at navigating the human mind. I had devised a three-pronged attack to defend Yokel and would stand by it with my life.

“If you stick with me for a minute here, you may need to stretch your minds a little bit. Let’s say you’re correct.” I looked to the state prosecutor, Frederick von Baobab. “Let’s say someone that looked like my client killed Boxx that night. Who’s to say it was Yokel? I mean, to start off, who is Harmony Yokel? What I mean is, what, exactly, constitutes and bears the name Yokel? If he only had one arm, would he still be Yokel? Probably. What if he didn’t have a brain or a heart? I’ll bet you’d still refer to him as Yokel. What I’m getting at is this: one cannot safely assume that the random assortment of atoms the night of August 2nd that killed Boxx was in any way assuredly linked to the entity we call Harmony Yokel.”

At this, Frederick von Baobab casually stood up and spoke to the room. “Do you hear this? The way this man speaks? You speak in such a childish manner and claw so desperately at a solution you do not have! So insufferably arrogant, you cannot defend your client! Have you no wisdom of the ages? No foundational morals?” With a smile, he sat down. I didn’t take it personally. I knew von Baobab for the genius he was and assumed him to be playing simply for the pathetic appeal. No worries, I still had two more persuasive points to introduce.

“Alright, fine. Don’t believe that one? I completely understand. Real quick, von Baobab, would you mind pointing to who you say committed the murder?” Frederick von Baobab pointed at my client in the chair over. “Wonderful. Let’s play along then, assume it really was Yokel who killed Boxx the night of August 2nd. Well, it couldn’t have been this man right here because he’s right next to me!” I could see that the room looked confused. That was expected. No one responded to Theseus’s ship well the first time.

“How could this man right here,” I put my hand on Yokel’s back, “commit a murder five weeks in the past? I mean, he’s right here! You all *just* saw von Baobab accuse *this* man as the murderer, yet the murderer was only present at the exact time of the crime. Each second of our lives we are changing. Mentally, physically, spiritually we are never the same person that we were. So to argue, as von Baobab does, that *this* man murdered Boxx is nonsense. He’s a completely different man!”

Frederick von Baobab stood. “Look how the sociopath speaks! Is he mad? Citing some time continuum bullshit is ridiculous! Act like a real lawyer and present some solid evidence!”

Von Baobab’s assault did nothing to discourage me. In fact, I could sense that I was actually winning. If you read between the lines you’ll find that von Baobab presented no real counterargument. Rather, he had called me names and insulted my methodology without any backing of his own ‘solid evidence.’ Now, for my finisher.

“Slow down there, Baobab. Let’s not resort to name calling in a courthouse.” Any opportunity to shred the prosecution’s ethos is a good opportunity. “Why do you bother prosecuting Yokel as such? I mean, who says it happened? Let’s look at the facts: you have witnesses who rely on memory and eyesight, you have fingerprints, you have a motive, and you have a dead man. First off, who are we to say these witnesses saw what they saw? It was nighttime, it was raining, and my client very well may be a doppelganger of the night’s assailant. Memory? What’d you have for lunch 22 days ago? Can’t remember? Memory fails all the time at the simplest tasks. They’re merely finding a scapegoat and moving with the herd. Fingerprints? You’re kidding, right? Some hedonistic layman could’ve grabbed prints from Yokel’s doorknob and displayed them at the crime scene to make a game out of it. Motive? It doesn’t innately mean anything. We all have enemies, right? Doesn’t mean we go around killing them! And a dead man? Could’ve choked himself. It’s happened before. Or could’ve paid an assassin to kill him as a fancifully plotted suicide. Ladies and gentleman, think what you must but I beg of you, never assume anything about anything ever!”

Exhausted, I took my seat. I did what I could with what little I had. Now, it was up to the honorable Judge Winthorpe to make the decision. I could tell he was hard in thought, which in my case was good. At last, he took the gavel.

“On the accusation that Harmony Yokel murdered Harlan Boxx the night of August 2nd, I find Harmony Yokel…innocent!”