

The Case of Humpty Dumpty

Inside a court room in the city of Yolkingham, witnesses are giving evidence in the case of Humpty Dumpty. They are trying to discover why Humpty Dumpty had a great fall from the wall and who, if anyone, is responsible. The Counsel for the PROSECUTION stands centre, they have just called the next WITNESS.

PROSECUTION: Do you swear...

WITNESS: Yeah, sometimes – when I lose me temper. Like the other day I hit me fumb wiv an 'ammer, and I said...

PROSECUTION: No, no, no. I mean, do you swear by Delia's Cookery Book that the eggidence...sorry, the evidence you shall give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

WITNESS: Oh that? Yeah, righto...

PROSECUTION: Thank you. You are a builder, yes?

WITNESS: That is correct. I am a builder.

PROSECUTION: A builder of walls?

WITNESS: Walls, 'ouses, swimmin' pools. You name it, I'll build it!

PROSECUTION: Yes, well, it is one wall in particular that we are interested in today. The Yolkingham City wall.

WITNESS: Right – yeah, that was one o' mine.

PROSECUTION: You built it?

WITNESS: Wiv me own 'ands.

PROSECUTION: And could you tell the court who hired you to build it?

WITNESS: Yes, I could. Definitely. Yes.

PROSECUTION: Well?

WITNESS: Well what?

PROSECUTION: Who was it?

WITNESS: Oh, it was the council, wasn't it?

PROSECUTION: Yolkingham city council?

WITNESS: Of course. What other council's going to hire me to build a wall round Yolkingham? *(To the Judge)* What's the matter wiv 'em?

PROSECUTION: How long did it take to build the wall?

WITNESS: Ooh, let me see now. *(Counting on his fingers)* A week.

PROSECUTION: A week?

WITNESS: Well, not including Sundays, obviously.

PROSECUTION: You built a high wall around the entire city in six days?

WITNESS: We don't 'ang about mate.

PROSECUTION: We?

WITNESS: Yeah. Me and my crack team, Duck and Goose.

PROSECUTION: Duck and Goose? An independent inspection has found that many of the bricks on top of the wall were laid without mortar.

WITNESS: What? Oh, er, yeah, we ran out, didn't we.

PROSECUTION: Why didn't you get some more?

WITNESS: Didn't have time. The council wanted the wall up quick – so that's what we done.

PROSECUTION: Did you – at any time – inform the council that the bricks on top of the wall were laid without mortar?

WITNESS: Not exactly, no.

PROSECUTION: So the council would not have known this?

WITNESS: Not unless they was stupid enough to climb up there.

PROSECUTION: No further questions.

By Simon Mawdsley