

# "TRUTH" GOES ON TRIAL

BY CLAUDE DUCLOUX



**S**CENE: A courtroom where a trial is about to commence. A jury is about to determine whether Truth actually exists anymore, or if it should be declared dead. The bailiff enters.

**BAILIFF:** All rise. The Honorable Mona Fide, Judge Presiding.

**JUDGE:** Ladies and gentlemen, as you heard in the opening statements, we have all had a great deal of trouble finding Truth lately. The Plaintiff, "Belief," has asked that Truth be declared dead and we substitute Belief in its place and stead. The Defendant, "Integrity," admits that Truth has indeed been hard to find, but submits Truth is alive and well, and that Truth is irreplaceable. All right, Counsel, call your first witness.

**PLAINTIFF:** Belief hereby calls "Perception" to the stand. [*proceeds*] Perception, isn't it true that you have repeatedly told us different versions when we asked you exactly where

Truth was?

**PERCEPTION:** Sure, but my job is not to tell you exactly where Truth is, but only to give you my information.

**PLAINTIFF:** But you don't really look very hard, do you? Admit it! You are completely untrustworthy.

**PERCEPTION:** It depends. Sure, when I've been hanging out with "Bias" and "Fear" I really get all turned around. Then I admit, I become much less reliable. Plus, I stop trying, because they confuse me.

**PLAINTIFF:** So, you blame "Bias?" Let's see how Bias responds? Bias?

**BIAS:** How dare you attack me? I keep everyone safe, calm, and unconflicted. I simplify and comfort troubled minds. People love me and rely upon my leadership. They will never give me up. They'd be lost without me. The same goes for my protégé, Fear.

**FEAR:** Well, actually I am studying with two of the best.

Bias is a powerful master, but don't forget Insecurity. Insecurity's paying my tuition.

**PLAINTIFF:** Indeed. What other techniques are important to your success?

**FEAR:** Oh, many. I start with an apprenticeship in Distortion, then a master class in Deception. What amazes me is how just a dab of Jealousy accentuates Bias. It really brings out the flavor.

**PLAINTIFF:** Can you tell this jury if, during your studies, you have ever seen Truth.

**FEAR:** Of course not. But in fairness, we don't look very hard. To be frank, Truth has rarely been our friend. But Belief has always accommodated us. It's what allows people to feel superior. People like to feel superior.

**JUDGE:** All right, may I hear from the Defense, "Integrity"?

**DEFENSE:** Ladies and gentlemen—to pretend Truth doesn't exist creates an alternate reality. There is only one Truth. The rest are imitators and imposters. I will prove that Truth is still alive. [*Turns to judge*] Your honor, I call Equivocation to the stand [*proceeds*]. Equivocation, you often know Truth don't you?

**EQUIVOCATION:** Well, uh, sure. But I want folks to like me, so I tell them what I think they want to hear.

**DEFENSE:** How did you develop the ability of avoiding your friend, Truth?

**EQUIVOCATION:** I did a fellowship in Insecurity, and it's addictive. Now, I'm pretty sure no one likes me. It's terrible to be me.

**DEFENSE:** So, what is your utility then?

**EQUIVOCATION:** I provide a back-door exit for those who want to avoid Truth.

**PLAINTIFF:** We object, your honor, nothing we have heard yet proves that Truth exists.

**DEFENSE:** May I proceed, your Honor, to provide that proof?

**JUDGE:** Proceed.

**DEFENSE:** We call Authentication to the stand [*proceeds*] Authentication, haven't you always been the right-hand man of Truth?

**AUTHENTICATION:** Absolutely. I ensure we keep a standard of honesty, accuracy, and reliability strong and effective.

**DEFENSE:** Then you are aware that Truth exists.

**AUTHENTICATION:** Of course it exists. My job is to guard and support Truth. I'm like Truth's butler.

Unlike these other fakers and pretenders, I do not create Truth, I merely corroborate it. The product of that corroboration is "Reliability."

**DEFENSE:** But the claims here are that, unless we see Truth, the void should be filled with Belief.

**AUTHENTICATION:** But Belief is unreliable, movable, and changeable. Truth is not like that.

**PLAINTIFF:** I object to the implication that my client, Belief, is unreliable. I call Candor to the stand. [*proceeds*]. What is your role, Candor?

**CANDOR:** My job is simply to ensure you are adequately worried, and not too reliant on facts you don't like. If people don't ascribe to Belief, my job is to enlist Fear and Bias to destroy those facts.

**DEFENSE:** [*rising suddenly*] Objection! You're not Candor, you're Duplicity! Move to strike, your Honor!



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**JUDGE:** Granted. The jury will ignore that testimony. You may proceed with your examination of Authentication.

**DEFENSE:** Can you explain your testimony that Truth is unchangeable and unique?

**AUTHENTICATION:** Truth is all around us. You can't bake a cake without Truth. You can't ride a bike, build a house, or plan or depend on anything if you substitute mere "Belief" for Truth: The family of Truth includes the reliability of math and

science. Mankind achieves and improves with Truth. But Belief accommodates manipulation. It allows unjustified wars to start, it destroys people and civilizations, while immutable forces in the universe thrive on Truth. We see Truth every time the sun rises, with the trajectory of a game-winning pass, and every time music hits your ears. You can't defy Truth with Equivocation, Fear, Bias, or Perception. They can only hide it. That's when I enter the fight. When I authenticate Truth, the result is Reality, and

that too has no substitute. In fact, here is Reality now.

**PLAINTIFF:** So, Reality, you are telling all the true "believers" in the world that their hopes and dreams are fake! How dare you?

**REALITY:** Not at all. Belief is an important tool in the human psyche: it spurs innovation, effort, hope, and investigation ... but it can't change Truth. In fact, in the right mind, Belief often leads to acceptance and peace. There is always a place for

Belief. But it must reflect Truth. That's when Belief is at its best.

**JUDGE:** Ladies and Gentlemen, I am granting a Directed Verdict, dismissing this effort to substitute Belief for Truth. The Court finds that the search for Truth is indispensable and should always continue. Case dismissed.

**PLAINTIFF:** We shall never give up. We shall appeal!

**JUDGE:** I "believe" you'll have to.

Keep the faith. ■