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The Mottley Law Firm

Hollywood Hype vs. Courtroom Truth

A LAWYER'S LENS ON REEL LIFE

One of the afflictions associated with a career in the law is that you can no longer watch law-related movies or shows without getting distracted by what you know about the situation unfolding on the screen.

Before I went to law school, I could watch movies like "The Firm" and "The Fugitive" (both from 1993) and just sit back and enjoy them. But after having gone to law school and spent more than a quarter-century practicing law, my ability to relax and enjoy a legal thriller has been forever altered. Don't get me wrong; I still like them immensely, and they're still among my favorite types of movies or shows.

Recently, after a trip to Santa Monica, California, I plowed through all four seasons of the Amazon Prime series "Goliath," which stars Billy Bob Thornton and is set in that city. While in Santa Monica, I dined at Chez Jay,

the famous bar where much of the series was filmed. I even sat in the very seat that Billy Bob routinely sat in. (Don't worry; I didn't drink *anywhere close* to how much he drank while sitting there!) I'm still immersed in the Netflix series "The Lincoln Lawyer," which is also set in California. But now, as I watch the plot unfold, I catch myself saying, "Ha! That would never happen!" or, "Yeah, right, if I tried that, I'd be in jail or disbarred!" Sometimes, I think, "Why did the 'lawyer' ask *that* question? That was stupid! Why didn't they ask *this* instead?"

Not too long ago, I settled in with my wife, Tricia, and one of our daughters, Catherine, to watch the 2024 film "Juror #2," directed by Clint Eastwood. This one was a *doozy* that had my lawyer brain setting off all kinds of fireworks. First of all, the way the "lawyers" handled the jury selection was horrible. Period. They didn't ask the right questions, and the ones they *did* ask were just stupid. I'm not going to ruin the plot for you, but the result was a hopelessly biased jury against the poor guy who was charged with murder — and the inclusion of someone on the jury who was hopelessly conflicted. Not only that, there were basic problems with the police investigation of this murder that *any* competent lawyer would have recognized immediately. These issues would have led to the charges not being filed in the first place, but no questions about these glaring mistakes and omissions in the police investigation were even asked during the trial. It wasn't until the jury convened to enter its verdict that some of these questions even surfaced.

So ... my ability to enjoy this film went off the rails almost immediately.

Of course, as always happens when you're the only lawyer in a crowd watching a legal thriller, my family started asking me what I would do. I had to tell my daughter, "I can't answer that now. I just want to enjoy the movie!" It would take me about a half-hour to analyze the law and tell her what I would do in that situation. Certain liberties must be taken in movies or TV shows for storytelling and entertainment purposes. Still, it's hard for someone like me to accept that many viewers get an unrealistic idea of how things work with *real* cases in *real* courtrooms.

I may not be Billy Bob or Clint, but I still exist in the real world — and my cases are nonfiction. Because of that, I can ensure my clients receive the best possible representation. By all means, please enjoy those legal thrillers at home or in the theater, but remember that *real* solutions to the legal matters that affect you are just a phone call away.



The legendary Chez Jay from the Amazon Prime series "Goliath" — one of my recent destinations.

—Kevin Mottley

HEART-SHAPED PIZZAS, SCAVENGER HUNTS, AND CANDY, OH MY!

Fun Valentine's Day Activities for the Whole Family

Of all the people in the world, whom do we love the most? Our families. So, why not spend the one day of the year centered on love with them? That's not to say a romantic evening with your significant other or a lovely Galentine's Day is out of the picture. This is a great opportunity to have fun with your kids — before they reach



that age when eye-rolling is a thing. So, parents, it's time to make the most of your kids' love and affection. Take a look at these family-friendly Valentine's Day activities everyone will enjoy!

MAKE HEART-SHAPED PIZZAS.

Everyone loves pizza, so this year, give it a Valentine's Day twist. Gather all the ingredients your family enjoys. Then, shape the dough into a gigantic heart, spread the pizza sauce, and add the toppings. Once it's done, slice it up and eat while watching everyone's favorite movie!

HAND OUT CARDS TO LOCAL NURSING HOME RESIDENTS.

Valentine's Day is all about love, right? Well, show your kids how it feels to spread that love and kindness to others by handing out cards to the seniors. If you have a particular senior

community you'd like to visit, call to arrange a time. This allows you and the kids to get creative and craft personalized cards to hand out and make someone's day special.

HAVE A VALENTINE'S DAY SCAVENGER HUNT.

Scavenger hunts are fun at any age. Purchase different items to hide, like a pink teddy bear, purple hearts, candy, and other love-themed trinkets for everyone to find around the house. Be sure to set a time limit, and don't forget to have a prize for the winner!

CREATE A THEMED PHOTO SHOOT.

Have everyone get dressed up and take really nice photos. You can even buy fun props for everyone, like heart-shaped sunglasses or feather boas, or make fun cardboard picture frames to hold up for the photos. Say "Cheese!"

PERIMENOPAUSAL POWER

PROVEN DIETARY PICKS FOR RELIEF

For many women, perimenopause — the transition into menopause, considered complete once menstrual cycles have ceased for a full year — can be a long and physically taxing experience. Before reaching full menopause (by the average age of 51), women often endure fluctuating estrogen and progesterone levels, weight gain, hot flashes, and other uncomfortable symptoms. Bodies under this level of stress may also experience inflammation, which can contribute to heart disease, Alzheimer's disease, and arthritis. While perimenopause is a natural phase in the female body's evolution, researchers and experts suggest the process can be more manageable through dietary changes and regular exercise.

Plant-Based Plates

According to Women's Health, the physical discomfort associated with perimenopause can be alleviated by drastically reducing the consumption of animal products and following a diet focused more on fruits, olive oil, vegetables, nuts, seeds, grains, and legumes. Research from George Washington University supports this dietary regimen, concluding that women experienced an 88% reduction in hot flashes by eating fewer animal-based foods and increasing their intake of legumes.



Weighing in on Wellness

In her book "Strong Foundations: Why Pelvic Health Matters," physiotherapist Clare Bourne describes perimenopause as "a time when thinking about what we are eating could not be more important," adding that focusing on "the power of nutrition and what it can do to help fuel us can be really helpful."

Nutritionist Emma Bardwell, coauthor of the book "The Perimenopause Solution: Take Control of Your Hormones Before They Take Control of You," recommends that women restructure their dietary habits well before entering the perimenopausal stage.

As she told Women's Health, "Ideally, I want women to make sure they're well prepped in advance, rather than waiting until their symptoms are impacting their well-being. Forewarned is forearmed."

The Exercise Equation

Naturally, diet is only part of a successful perimenopausal health plan. If a woman is already overweight, establishing a daily exercise routine before the transition begins can help reduce the burdens on her body. Simple movements, like lunges or regular walks, can go a long way in easing an expected — but nonetheless challenging — part of getting older.

The Patent Protector

Lincoln's Leadership in Intellectual Property

"I always thought the man that made the corn should eat the corn." — Abraham Lincoln

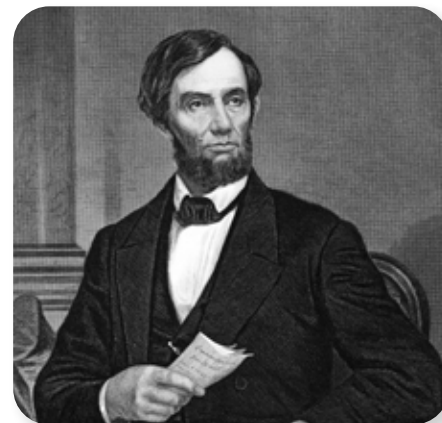
The above quote from our 16th president, born this month in 1809, speaks to much more than what some of you may be adding to your dinner plates this evening.

One of the most celebrated and studied leaders in our nation's history, President Lincoln wore many hats in his lifetime, including working for a time as a lawyer — and not a bad one at that. During his legal career, he earned his legendary nickname, "Honest Abe," for his commitment to truth and justice.

Throughout his professional and political career, he remained a staunch supporter of people's right to free labor and to enjoy the tangible results of their hard work. That's why his corn analogy was so effective —

if American citizens are going to work hard, they deserve all the benefits that result from that dedication.

Lincoln's focus on independence and entrepreneurship led him to become a pioneer in intellectual property protection and patent law. He believed that individuals' "fire of genius" must come from the "fuel of interest." Simply put, people should be encouraged to invent new things, knowing their ownership and economic interests are protected. Lincoln's steadfast defense of patent laws was reflected in his personal life, as he became the first — and, as of this writing, *only* — U.S. president to receive a patent. In 1849, he was given Patent No. 6469 for a device he created that was designed to lift boats over obstructions in bodies of water. Although his invention was never mass-produced, a replica based on his design sits in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.



As an attorney, I honor this American legend for the honesty and integrity he brought to my profession and for his efforts to ensure our country's hardest-working and most inventive citizens have the protections necessary to pursue their wildest dreams. Whether you're a small-business owner, an accomplished employee, or someone who uses their garage as a mecca of invention, you owe a lot to Abraham Lincoln.

—Kevin Mottley

HOW I DAMAGED A CLIENT'S CAR ...

AND EARNED HIS TRUST

As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, celebrating President Lincoln's birthday reminds me of how important it is to be honest with people. As a lawyer, I have a duty to inform my clients of *everything* about their cases — especially the truth. That said, I'd like to share a time when being honest with a client — even when it didn't put me in the best light — paid off in the long run.

I've had the privilege of representing several celebrities in my career, which is always thrilling and interesting. One client in particular was a famous professional basketball player. Like many successful members of his profession, he drove a very expensive car — in this case, a Mercedes-Maybach. At the time, that automobile cost more than my house.

After giving a deposition one day, he decided to let off some steam at a local bar/restaurant, and I accompanied him there. Before long, his entourage pulled up in the Maybach. The restaurant hostess informed me the car would be towed if it remained in their chosen location. When I shared that news with my clients' friends, they handed me the keys, and off I went to drive the car to my office building's parking garage.

Unfortunately, while trying to navigate a sharp turn, I heard a very loud *crunch*. Uttering a few words I won't repeat here as I drove up the parking deck, I wondered how badly I had damaged the Maybach. Well, I had completely torn up one of the vehicle's very expensive and fancy rims.

As I walked back to the restaurant, I asked myself, "Why did you drive this car? What do I say to my client?" I thought, "Well, he's your client. You *have* to tell him the truth." With his entire entourage watching, I put my hand on his shoulder and said, "I've got to tell you something ... I scratched your car."

Without even looking at me, he took a swig of his beer, pointed to his friends, and said, "That's the first time anybody's ever told me the truth about scratching my car!"

From that day forward, he trusted me and listened to every word I said.

—Kevin Mottley

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Inspired by EasyDessertRecipes.com



Fabulous Flourless Chocolate Cake

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup chopped dark chocolate
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 4 large eggs, separated
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup almond flour

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 F and grease a springform pan with butter or nonstick spray.
2. Place chocolate in a medium bowl. Pour warm, melted butter over it, wait for 2 minutes, then stir until chocolate is melted and smooth.
3. Add sugar, almond flour, and walnuts and stir to incorporate. Stir in the egg yolks and set mixture aside.
4. In the bowl of a standing mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, whip egg whites on medium until stiff peaks form.
5. Fold 1/4 of the whipped egg whites into the chocolate batter. Repeat, 1/4 at a time, until egg whites are incorporated.
6. Pour batter into springform pan and bake for 30–35 minutes.
7. Remove from the oven and let it cool completely before removing from the pan. Dust with cocoa powder before serving.