

SCRIPT TITLE

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INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Lisa gets sworn in. She is furious with her Defense Attorney fiance, Vinny, who is trying his first case and trying to clear his innocent nephew. Both he and his friend are on trial for murder. Many witnesses have identified them as the murderers. A picture Miss Mona Lisa Vito took of the crime scene has sparked something in Vinny and he desperately gets his angry fiance back into the courtroom against her will.

BALIFF

Hold up your right hand, please.

She does.

BALIFF (CONT'D)

Do you swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth so help you God?

LISA

(flippant)

Yeah.

PROSECUTOR

Miss Vito. What is your current profession?

LISA

I'm an out of work hair dresser.

PROSECUTOR

An out of work hair dresser. Now, in what way does that qualify you as an expert in automobiles?

LISA

It doesn't.

PROSECUTOR

Well, in what way are you qualified?

LISA

Well my father was a mechanic, his father was a mechanic, my mother's father was a mechanic, my three brothers are mechanics, four uncles on my father's side are mechanics...

PROSECUTOR

Miss Vito, your family is obviously qualified, but have you ever worked as a mechanic?

LISA

In my father's garage, yeah.

PROSECUTOR

As a mechanic?

LISA

Yeah.

PROSECUTOR

What did you do in your father's garage?

LISA

Tune ups, oil changes, brake realigning, engine rebuilds, rebuilt some trannies, rear ends --

PROSECUTOR

Okay, okay, but does being an ex-mechanic actually qualify you as being an expert in tire marks?

LISA

No. Thank you. Goodbye.

She gets up to leave.

JUDGE

Sit down and stay there until you are told to leave!

She sits back down reluctantly.

VINNY

Your Honor, Miss Vito's expertise is in general automotive knowledge. It is in this area that her testimony will be applicable.

Fine. The prosecutor moves in.

PROSECUTOR

Miss Vito, being an expert in general automotive knowledge, can you tell me what would be the correct ignition timing on a 1955 Bellaire Chevrolet with a 327 cubic inch engine and 4-barrell carburetor?

LISA

It's a bogus question.

He pounces.

PROSECUTOR

Does that mean you can't answer it?

LISA

It's a bogus question! It's impossible to answer!

PROSECUTOR

Impossible because you don't know the answer!

LISA

Nobody could answer that question!

PROSECUTOR

Your Honor I move to disqualify Miss Vito as an expert witness!

JUDGE

Can you answer the question?

LISA

(to the judge)  
No! It is a trick question!

JUDGE

Why is it a trick question?

LISA

Cause Chevy didn't make a 327 in '55, the 327 didn't come out til '62 -- and it wasn't offered in the Bellaire with the 4-barrell carburetor until '64. However, in 1964 the correct ignition timing would be 4 degrees before top dead center.

Silence in the awed courtroom.

PROSECUTOR

Well...she's acceptable, your Honor.

He steps back. Vinny rises and holds up a picture.

VINNY

Miss Vito, did you take this picture?

LISA

(still mad at him)  
You know I did.

VINNY

And what is this picture of?

LISA

You know what it is.

VINNY

Miss Vito, it has been argued by me, the Defense, that two sets of guys met up at the Sack-o-suds at the same time, driving identical metallic mint green 1964 Buick Skylark convertibles. Now, can you tell us by what you see in this picture if the Defense's case "holds water"?

She looks, but doesn't look closely.

VINNY (CONT'D)

Miss Vito, please answer the question. Does the defense's case hold water?

She looks for a long while and discovers something. She looks up, no longer mad - inspired.

LISA

No! The Defense's is wrong!

VINNY

Are you sure?

LISA

(he needs her!)  
I'm positive.

VINNY

But how can you be so sure?

LISA

Because there is no way that these tire marks were made by '64 Buick Skylark. These marks were made by a '63 Pontiac Tempest.

PROSECUTOR

Objection, your Honor. Can we clarify to the court whether the witness is stating opinion or fact?

JUDGE

This is your opinion?

LISA

It's a fact!

VINNY

I find it hard to believe that this kind of information could be ascertained simply by looking at a picture!

LISA

Would you like me to explain?

VINNY

I would love to hear this!

JUDGE

So would I!

LISA

The car that made these two equal length tire marks had posi-traction. You can't make those marks without posi-traction, which was not available on the '64 Buick Skylark.

VINNY

And why not? What is Posi-traction?

LISA

It's a "limited slip differential" which distributes power equally to both the right and left tires. The '64 Skylark had a regular differential - which anyone whose been stuck in the mud in Alabama knows - you step on the gas and one tire spins and the other tire does nothing.

Jurers shake their heads as they have had experience.

VINNY

Is that it?

LISA

No, there's more! You see when the left tire mark goes up on the curb and the right tire mark stays flat and even? Well the '64 Skylark had a solid rear axle so when the left tire would go up on the curb, the right tire would tilt and ride along the edge...but that didn't happen here. The tire mark stayed flat and even. This car had an independent rear suspension. Now, in the 60s, there were only two other cars made in America that had both posi-traction and independent rear suspension and enough power to make these marks. One was the Corvette, which could NEVER be confused with the Buick Skylark. The other had the same body length, height, width, weight, wheel base, and wheel track as '64 Buick Skylark and that was the 1963 Pontiac Tempest.

VINNY

And because both cars were made by GM, were both cars available in metallic mint green paint?

LISA

They were!

VINNY

(with great love)

Thank you very much, Miss Vito. No more questions. You have been a lovely, lovely witness.