

## The Strange Case of the Creator v The Italian Army

Ah good morning, is that General Beretta? It is, ah excellent. Good morning my name is Smartdood, Raphael Smartdood, I'm calling from DILF. DILF? You know - The Divine Infallible Law firm. What d'you mean - you've never heard of us? Well, you may never forget us after this call. I'm phoning on behalf of Jehovah. Jehovah? You know - The One? The creator of everything. The Big Kahuna? That's him. You might well have seen various portraits on the ceiling of some place called the Sistine Chapel. Not a great likeness to be honest. What? Is he the one with a long white beard and a big stick, always in a bad mood? No, that's a gross misrepresentation. Actually we could sue you for that. Defamation of character! Don't panic I'm only kidding, no need to worry. We can't touch you for that really, it's a widely held worldview. No, I'm calling to sue you for another matter entirely.

Well, actually we wanted to talk to the Imperial Might of the Roman Army, you know those big shots with the empire that would last for all eternity. Yea, that's the one, but it seems they've long gone. Yes, has-beens, collapsed under the weight of their bloated egos and swaggering pride long ago. Whereas the creator and his rag tag bunch of no hopers - well they're still here. Yes, ironic eh? Who'd have thought it? Well, here's the thing, the creator's been watching a lot of daytime TV lately and some of those afternoon adverts have got him thinking. You know the ones? 'Have you been injured at work? Has a ladder fallen on your head? Did you stub your toe getting out the wrong side of the bed this morning?' Yes, all those kind of ads. Well, they put an idea into the creator's mind.

You, see, he got injured at work once, and he wants to make a claim. (Pause) Against you. Well you see he was a carpenter, or... more of a builder really. Yes, he often whacked his thumb with a hammer and dropped Black and Deckers on his foot. You got the picture. Was always getting specks of sawdust in his eyes. But he's not seeking compensation for any of that. On no, he's cool about all that. Went with the territory, you know.

No the reason I'm calling you now is regarding a little incident with three nails and a spear. Yes, oh and I believe there was a cross involved as well. That's the one. Crucifixion. You've got it. No we haven't got the cross anymore, they were just reused time and again, plus a thousand churches around the planet claim they still have a bit of it tucked away somewhere in their vestries. But the point is, your ancestors, them decimating old Romans, all togas, straight roads and mass executions - they only went and severely injured our client one Friday afternoon. Yes. Deliberately. How serious? Well, what you might call - very. He was considerably incapacitated. What you might call - dead. Oh we have it on record. He was off work for quite a while. Ooh, for at least a whole weekend. He lost three days. Admittedly one of them was his day of rest, but that's not the point here. He was injured at work and your lot were clearly to blame and he wants payback now. A lot of payback. A HUGE amount.

I know the perpetrators are long gone, but that won't let you off the hook. It's time to make amends. A figure? Ooh shall we start the bidding at twenty... billion? Well, what's a divine life worth to you then? What? What are you doing? Looking up what? In what book? What are you on about? A get-out clause? I doubt it, this is a watertight case. You won't find anything that lets you off the hook here, pal. What? He said *what* while he was dying? Are you sure? 'Forgive them'? FORGIVE THEM!!!! What the perpetrators? Completely? No payback! Are you sure? The debt cancelled? No compensation, no litigation? Oh! That's frustrating. With times as they are the creator was looking for a little extra to spend. Oh well that's dealt with that one hasn't it. Completely forgiven, who'd have thought it. We could what? Try 'Cash my gold'? That's a point, I think the creator was given a bag of the stuff when them wise men showed up. We'll try that. Thanks very much. Au revoir, I mean Valedico. What? It's Latin. Oh well, Ciao then!