

Magistrate and Clerk audition

Clerk: *(Authoritatively)* Silence in court!

(the noise continues)

Clerk: *(Louder)* Silence in court! Silence I say!

(the noise decreases)

Clerk: All stand for her worship, the Magistrate

(The weasels murmur and the magistrate enters)

Clerk: Silence! Silence in court!

(The chatter dies down, the Magistrate enters with her knitting)

Magistrate: Proceed, Mr. Clerk. Who's next?

Clerk: *(flicking through his notes)* Your Honour, the case of Toad, of Toad Hall

Magistrate: Ah yes, the infamous Mister Toad. What's he been up to this time? Knit one, pearl one.

Clerk: There are three counts against the prisoner, Your Honour; firstly, of stealing a very valuable motor car, secondly, of driving to excessive speeds and to the public danger, and thirdly, of gross impertinence to the total police.

Magistrate: Deary me, gross impertinence as well, you say. I could put him away for a long time for that couldn't I? Cast off drop one.

Clerk: Well...er... Your Honour. That is a matter for your to decide, but of course I shall be quite delighted to help in any way. In my opinion, however, the longer the better.

Magistrate: Oh good; well I suppose we had better see this Mister Toad. Send him in. Pass the slipstitch over.

Clerk: *(Calling)* Send in Toad!

Magistrate: Mister Clerk. The prisoner is quite obviously guilty of all three offences. Will you tell us please what is the very stiffest penalty we can impose. Without, of course, giving the benefit of the doubt, because there isn't any.

Clerk: Well, Your Honour. Some people would consider that stealing the motor car was the worst offence, and so it is. But cheeking the police carries the severest penalty, and so it ought. Suppose you were to say: twelve

months for the theft, which is mild; three years for the furious driving, which is lenient, and fifteen years for the cheek, which was pretty bad sort of cheek. Those figures, if added together correctly, tot up to nineteen years.

Magistrate: First rate!

(Loud cheers from the Weasel, the clerk raises his hand for silence)

Clerk: So you had better make it a round twenty years and be on the safe side.