

Cast of Characters

Patty procrastinator:

Thinks she's in for an easy time when it comes to paying her parking ticket.

Recording:

Politely takes Patty on maddening wild goose chase, thanks to the taxpayers of Santangeles Beach, California.

Scene

Patty Procrastinator must pay her parking ticket to the city of Santangeles Beach.

Time

Less than five minutes, I promise.

SETTING: Patty Procrastinator's living room.

AT RISE: Patty Procrastinator dialing a phone.

(After she finishes dialing,
Patty fishes for her wallet.)

RECORDING

Hello. Thank you for calling the traffic violations department of Santangeles Beach, California. It is our duty to take care of your needs as quickly as possible.

(Patty presses 0.)

We will gladly furnish you with a customer service representative, but our studies show that using our automated system justifies the money we spent on the consultant who recommended and designed it. To use our automated system --

PATTY PROCRASTINATOR

No thanks.

(Patty presses 0.)

RECORDING

Thank you. We will gladly furnish you with a customer service representative, but only after we frustrate you so much that you choose our automated system. To use our super-convenient and extraordinarily secure pay-by-phone system, press 1.

(Reluctantly, Patty complies.)

Thank you. Please have your credit card, violation ticket, drivers license, car registration, social security card and birth certificate ready.

PATTY PROCRASTINATOR

My what?

RECORDING

To repeat this information, press 1.

(Patty presses 1.)

Please have your credit card, violation ticket, drivers license and everything else I just mentioned ready. To pay your ticket, press 1. If you are missing one of the necessary items, press 2.

(Patty presses 2.)

If you are missing your credit card, press 1. If you are missing your violation ticket, press 2. ...

(Patty counts on her fingers)

If you are missing your drivers license --

(Patty presses 5.)

You are missing your social security card.

PATTY PROCRASTINATOR

No!

RECORDING

If you left your social security card in a safe deposit box, press 1. If you don't have one, press 2. If you meant to press 6 for a missing birth certificate, press 3.

(Patty presses 3.)

You may now press 6 like you should have done the first time.

(Patty presses 6.)

In lieu of a birth certificate, you can still use pay-by-phone if you answer the following security questions. Type in the last four digits of your social security number.

(Patty complies. Two-beat pause.)

Thank you. Type in your year of birth.

(Patty complies. Two-beat pause.)

Thank you. We're almost there! We appreciate your patience. This is your final security question. Who was the Most Valuable Player of the 1904 World Series?

(Bewildered, Patty reacts accordingly and DOES NOT press any button.)

You have not pressed any buttons. That is the correct answer. There was no World Series in 1904. Please enter your traffic violation number now.

PATTY PROCRASTINATOR

Hallelujah.

(She presses buttons at a reasonable speed.)

RECORDING

I'm sorry, but you did not enter your ticket number in the allotted time. To request more time, press 1.

(Patty presses 1.)

Thank you. To request five more seconds, press 1. To request 10 more seconds, press 2. If you think Red Sox fans have become increasingly annoying, press 3.

(Patty presses 3.)

Thank you. We think Red Sox fans are insufferable, too. There's one at the No Shame Theater tonight. To bludgeon him with a croquet mallet, press 1. To lock him in a room with a TV that shows nothing but Hannity & Colmes, press 2. To enter your ticket number in an unlimited window of time, press 3.

PATTY PROCRASTINATOR

Now that's more like it.

(Patty presses 3.)

RECORDING

Thank you. You owe 47 dollars and zero cents. Refusal to pay this amount by the end of business hours today will result in a penalty of 517 dollars and 32 cents.

(MORE)

RECORDING (CONT'D)

If you think this is fair, press 1. If this is unfair, press 2.

(Patty presses 2.)

Tough shit. You should have done this by mail three weeks ago.

To pay by Visa, press 1.

(Patty presses 1.)

Thank you. Enter the 16 digit number now.

PATTY PROCRASTINATOR

(Complying)

That's more like it.

(Patty finishes.)

RECORDING

We seem to be having trouble with your credit card. To start over, press 1.

(Patty slams the phone down.)

PATTY PROCRASTINATOR

No, no, no, no!

(as she abuses the phone)

You can have your five hundred dollars and who-gives-a-shit cents!
You can place a boot on my car, tow it, turn it into a Rubik's
Cube for all I care! I would rather walk to work, in my bare
feet, carrying 65 pounds of ski equipment while dodging traffic
on the 10 every day for the rest of my life than line your coffer
with my ... fucking ... money!

(Patty storms off. The
phone has been smashed to
bits. Pause.)

RECORDING

Thank you. A customer service representative will be with you momentarily.