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# ADMINISTERING JUSTICE—TO CREATURES BIG AND SMALL

*Jennifer C. Cass\**

**I**T was with great anticipation—and a bit of trepidation—that I began working as a law clerk in the late summer of 1987 for Judge Barefoot Sanders. Truthfully, at the start, I was a bit overwhelmed at the thought of clerking for such an icon and of taking on the responsibility that I knew Judge Sanders entrusted to his clerks. I came equipped that first week, with a determined and serious can-do attitude, ready to administer justice on behalf of a judge I felt proud to serve. Well, little did I know that that very first week, justice would be administered on a level I never dreamed of!

My office, which was right off of the Judge's chambers, had a second door that opened out to the Judge's law library. Late one afternoon, while I was in my office delving into the details of a summary judgment brief, I heard the sound of what seemed like a cricket coming from the library. I ignored it at first, focusing back on the task at hand, but the sound soon became rather loud and persistent. Shortly thereafter, the Judge entered my office to ask me a question about a case, and as I answered through the next round of cricket noises, he wandered curiously out of my office into the library. Several people were in the library at the time, including my co-clerk, Dawn Davenport and revered custodian, Fred Whitener. The Judge began looking intently for the cricket among the legal periodicals and when we laid eyes on it, he yelled "Don't kill it! Don't kill it!" Next thing we all knew, the Judge was down on the floor on his hands and knees trying to catch the little noise maker explaining, with great sincerity, that it was "bad luck" to kill a cricket. It was with wide eyes that we all watched him get up off the floor and leave the library, cricket in cupped hands. I never knew what happened to the little visitor (or how the heck it got there), but the Judge didn't return to chambers for a good ten minutes after the incident.

Back to work we all went; but for me, I settled back in the seat at my desk, a little less trepid, a little more comfortable and relaxed. And from that moment on I KNEW that this was going to be a great clerkship, and that all of us—those who worked at (and visited) Judge Sanders' court—were in good hands.

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\* Law Clerk to Judge Barefoot Sanders, August 1987-March 1989.

