

Strike 3 You're Out - Strike 4 You're in the Door

The battle between Big Auto and the Little Guy

This is a story of a man named Stan. Stan the Man is used to getting his way. You see, he is a successful professional, with a trophy wife, three perfect children and a huge house in the burbs. If there were a needle above his head, it would always be pointed up. Stan is a winner.

Except when he is a losing, losing the battle between **Big Auto and the Little Guy**. For the sake of this story, we are going to tweak the rules of baseball. You'll catch on quite quickly. Also for the sake of a good story, let's say that Stan is the owner of a **Bixby**, the newest and latest family-sized SUV from the same manufacturer that brought you the **Tiguan**.

The story begins after Stan's wife Janice noticed a strange smell when driving the kids home from the movies one Friday night.

Strike #1 - Stan tells Jan to take the luxury family-hauler to the dealer the next day, which is the Saturday after the 4th of July. The Service Manager takes the **Bixby** for a drive, to get a sense (of smell) of what is going on. When he gets back to the garage, he looks under the 3rd row of seats and discovers a greasy cardboard tray of nachos. "I believe I found the culprit," he tells her with assurance.

Strike #2 - On the way back from church, with everyone clean and in their Sunday best, she detects that very same smell, not of cheese and jalapenos. On Monday she is back at the dealership, where she is told, "The four-wheel disc brakes are out of sync, causing the friction fluid to burn slightly."

Strike #3 - This time, this day the **Bixby** starts to smell and she hasn't even pulled out of her garage. The daytime running lights are flickering and the cabins smells like the family cat got electrocuted. The dealer tow-truck shows up and takes the **Bixby** away. "There was a loose wire on the headlights. You shouldn't have any more problems.

Timeout: This was the third attempt to fix Stan & Jan's family van. Normally that would be covered by a Lemon Law. But this is Rhode Island, a state that allows for 4 attempts to repair the problem.

Strike #4 - It is now Wednesday after the 4th of July and it is Stan's day off. It is summer in New England and Stan entertains his clients by treating them to golf at his Country Club. He is running a little late. It seems his SUV would not turn on. After pounding on the dash he is able to get to the course where the other 3 are waiting for him. He pulls up to the parking lot, shuts off the engine, hops out of the **Bixby**.

After the round, he returns to find the dashboard and all the components melted. "I talked to the manufacturer and we will have all the parts in by next week, Stan. Why don't you take our loaner for the weekend?" The loaner is sub-compact and it is playoff weekend for soccer, baseball and badminton.

Strike four, ball four, whatever, one visit to www.lemonlaw.com and Stan would come to find out that he does not have to put up with his defective (and fictional) **Bixby**. He has a bona fide lemon, one of the worst cars of 2014 and he is entitled to a whole slew of compensation, not only for the vehicle, sans insurance, but for his inconveniences as well.

This story of **Big Auto and the Little Guy** ends with more than a measure of justice. Make sure you don't get the runaround.**

**This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to any actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

But this could have been you!