

IN THE JUSTICE COURT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA,  
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF MISSOULA  
BEFORE Karen A. Orzech, JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

Cause No. CR-2010-70AB CJ

STATE OF MONTANA,

Plaintiff,

-vs-

GARY LEE BASSETT,

Defendant.

**RECEIVED**

**FEB 04 2010**

**JUSTICE COURT**

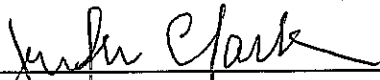
COMPLAINT

JENNIFER S. CLARK, Deputy Missoula County Attorney, being duly sworn, deposes and says that on or about the 1st day of February, 2010, at Missoula County, the above-named Defendant committed the offense(s) of AGGRAVATED CRUELTY TO ANIMALS, a Felony, in violation of Montana law, namely: Mont. Code Ann. §45-8-217, punishable by 2 years Montana State Prison and/or \$2,500 fine.

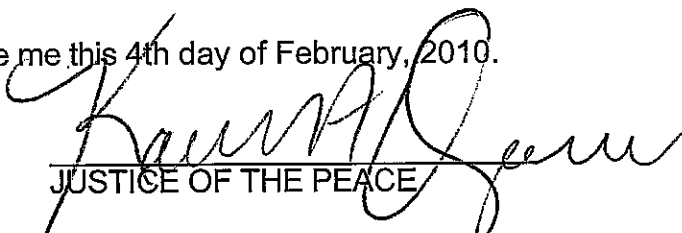
The facts constituting the offense(s) are:

On or about the 1st day of February, 2010, the above-named Defendant purposely or knowingly inflicted cruelty to an animal with the purpose of terrifying, torturing, or mutilating the animal.

DATED this 4th day of February, 2010.

  
JENNIFER S. CLARK  
Deputy Missoula County Attorney

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 4th day of February, 2010.

  
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

IN THE JUSTICE COURT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA,  
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF MISSOULA  
BEFORE Karen A. Orzech, JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

RECEIVED

FEB 04 2010

JUSTICE COURT

Cause No. CR. 2010-7048 C2

STATE OF MONTANA,

Plaintiff,

-vs-

GARY LEE BASSETT,

Defendant.

AFFIDAVIT OF PROBABLE  
CAUSE

STATE OF MONTANA     )  
                                  : ss  
County of Missoula     )

JENNIFER S. CLARK, Deputy County Attorney of Missoula County,  
Montana, being first duly sworn upon oath, deposes and says:

I have read the official law enforcement reports regarding the investigation of GARY LEE BASSETT for allegedly committing the offense(s) set forth in the complaint and based upon the information contained in the reports, if true, believe probable cause exists to justify charging the above-named defendant as specified in the accompanying complaint.

On February 1, 2010, Missoula City Police Officers responded to a Missoula apartment for a report of a disturbance. Officer Curtis knocked on the door and a male, later identified as Gary Bassett, answered the door. Officer Curtis explained who he was and why he was there. Bassett stated he was the only one home and repeatedly invited Officer Curtis to come in to make sure

everything was ok. Officer Curtis immediately noticed a small cat with blood coming from its mouth. It initially did not appear to be breathing. The cat was lying outside the bathroom door on a towel. The bathroom was messy with what looked like dryer lint and other items scattered about.

Officer Christensen noticed Bassett had deep scratches on his left forearm and on his hands and asked what happened. Bassett stated that something was wrong with the cat and it attacked and scratched him. The injuries were consistent with cat scratches. He observed Bassett's left palm was covered with blood and his right thumb had hair stuck to it. The hair appeared to have come from the kitten. Bassett would not allow them to photograph his injuries.

Officer Kazinsky noticed a small electric razor plugged into the wall outlet. There were a few small patches/pieces of grayish colored hair on the floor close to it. Officer Kazinsky asked Gary if he understood why they were there and explained that a neighbor had heard noises from the apartment that sounded like a disturbance. Officer Kazinsky stated they just wanted to make sure everyone was ok. Gary stated that he understood and appreciated that officers were checking on people's welfare.

Bassett's behavior repeatedly cycled from complacent to very agitated. During the first couple minutes while in the residence Gary appeared calm and cooperative. At one point he even asked Officer Kazinsky if he was ok. Bassett did not seem to understand the situation. Officer Christensen attempted to explain the situation to Bassett once again. Bassett again became agitated and said he was angry that officers "barged in" to his residence. Officer Christensen

reminded Bassett that he gave officers permission to enter his residence. When Officer Christensen pointed out that the cat was bloody and barely alive, Gary's mood instantly changed. Upon being asked what had happened to the cat, Gary became noticeably angry and defensive, stating that he wanted a lawyer. Gary's mood then quickly changed again and he re-engaged Officer Kazinsky in small talk. As they were leaving, Gary became very angry and defensive again. He stated that he wanted all of their names and badge numbers and he had not given them permission to be in his residence. Officer Christensen provided Gary with his business card which listed the report number and Pruyn's Veterinary Clinic.


Officers realized the kitten needed medical attention, but quickly attempted to document the kitten with cell phone photos. The kitten was then wrapped in the towel and taken to Pruyn Veterinary clinic. Officer Curtis noted the kitten was cold to the touch and was wet from the top of the forehead all the way down both back legs. The top of the kitten's head had been shaved. Blood was around the kitten's mouth and inside the mouth. The kitten was barely breathing and mostly unresponsive. The kitten had dryer lint and cat food stuck to her fur.

After leaving Gary's residence, Officer Kazinsky contacted the original complainant. She stated that upon walking outside the front door to smoke a cigarette, she heard a male's voice yelling and screaming inside the apartment. She described it as someone pleading for mercy and remembered hearing the voice yell something like "Oh please God no." She stated it sounded like it was

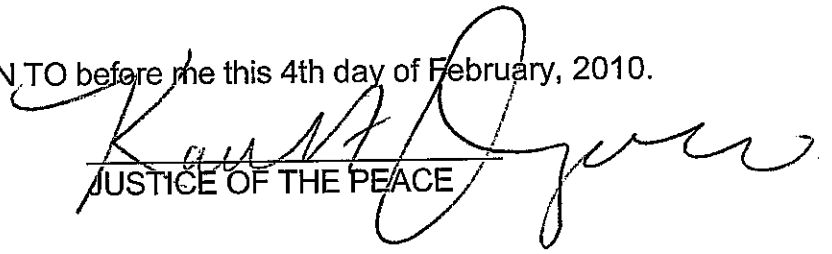
coming from downstairs and close to the front door. She said she listened to the yelling for a few more minutes before she called 911.

Dr. Shaumberg reported that the kitten arrived with below-normal body temperature and was in shock. She had a head injury on the left side of her head causing a concussion. The right side of her pelvis was broken and compressed in. These injuries indicate either multiple blows or a significant force, like a kick, that sent her air born and into another object. X-rays did not reveal a spinal injury but were discovered after she was sent to Washington State University for further evaluation. There it was determined that the injuries to her spine were irreparable and she was euthanized.

On February 2, 2010, officers went to the residence to serve a search warrant. They knocked on the door several times and announced it was the police. There was no answer for a long period of time. Detective Denton then heard a male's voice state he was afraid to come to the door. Bassett stated he was going to shoot himself and end it all. Although he denied remembering what happened, he stated he was sorry for what happened to the kitten and that he has nothing to live for. He informed Detective Denton that he had been diagnosed with clinical depression for nineteen years. Bassett offered to pay for the kitten's injuries. Mental health professionals were called after his repeated statements to end his life.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JENNIFER S. CLARK  
Deputy Missoula County Attorney

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this 4th day of February, 2010.

  
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

ORDER

Upon reading the foregoing Affidavit, the Court finds that there is probable cause to believe the above-named Defendant committed the crimes charged.

DATED this 4th day of February, 2010 at 11:58 a.m./p.m.

  
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE