



"YOUR DAY IN COURT" - ACT 4 OUR PARDON AND FREEDOM (Part 1)

Setting: Judge (with gavel) at the bench. Prosecutor at one table; Public Defender and Defendant and another table.

Characters:

Narrator/Bailiff

Judge Righteous (in black judge's robe, with gavel)

Public Defender (socially awkward, blunt, not tactful, doesn't spare feelings)

Defendant Gilda Guilty - wearing orange (as in jail garb)

Narrator: Last week, Gilda Guilty was found guilty of being a sinner in the first degree, despite her arguments and excuses to the contrary. Tonight, court is reconvening for the punishment phase of her trial.

Bailiff: All Rise! *(Judge enters)*

Bailiff: The Honorable Judge Righteous is presiding. You may be seated.

Judge: Today is the punishment phase for the case of Ms. Gilda Guilty versus the State of Texas. This court has found her guilty of being a first degree sinner, which carries with it a punishment of death with no possibility of prison, parole or dismissal.

Gilda: *(turns to her Defender)* Oh, no. I don't think I can hear this. I'm afraid. *(crying)*

Judge: However, it has come to the court's attention that someone has come forward and offered His life as a substitute for Ms. Guilty. He has offered to take upon Himself fully all of her sin and forthcoming punishment.

Gilda: What? Who?

Public Defender: What? I've never heard of such a thing in a court of law. Is this legal?

Gilda: Shhh! Let the judge finish:

Defender: Permission to approach the bench, Your Honor. *(judge motions them to the bench)*. Your honor, I've never heard of this before.

Prosecutor: Finally we agree on something. Ms. Guilty is undeniably guilty of this charge. I'm not aware of any precedent for a substitution like this

Defender: I’m a little surprised as well. But speaking for my client, we are open to hearing more.

Judge: Atonement has been made and accepted in prior cases. But you are right that this is a unique offer. So, if it’s okay with you ladies, I’d like to continue. Please return to your seats. *(everyone sits down)* As I was about to say, the party has made the offer to take Ms. Guilty’s sin and shame upon Himself.

Gilda: But why would He do that?

Judge: Apparently, He loves you and is willing to demonstrate that great love by dying in your place.

Gilda: Wow! What would I need to do? This is unbelievable. I don’t deserve it. Who is this person that would do such a great thing for me?

Judge: His name is Jesus. His death fulfills the righteous requirement of the law. He loves you so much and is rich in mercy. He wants you to live free of sin and guilt rather than face the eternal penalty of sin. No, you don’t deserve it, you were judged guilty before this court. But according to the law, IF you accept His offer, it is legal and binding and I then can offer you a full pardon.

Gilda: A full pardon!! Like...I just go home and live my life?

Judge: Yes, the court will set you free, not to go back to your old life, but to live a better life...an abundant life.

Public Defender: We accept the court’s offer.

Gilda: Yes! I accept! I accept! Thank you! Thank you! What a relief!

Judge: With your acceptance, I am signing this document of pardon. This document forgives you, the sinner, of sin in the first degree that you were convicted of, and restores you who were dead in trespasses and sin to life abundant. Furthermore, you should be aware of the term “double jeopardy” which states that you cannot be tried again on these charges.

Gilda: So you’re saying I can just walk out of this courtroom, and all those accusation are behind me?

Judge: Not just behind you, Ms. Guilty. They are gone as far as the east is from the west. You are free to go, Ms. Guilty. I won’t see you in this courtroom again.

(Gilda emotional, hugging, crying, everyone shaking hands)

Prosecutor: *(to Gilda) (not happy)* You deserved death. You are very lucky, and just so you know, I don't like to lose. I'm not done with you, and I'm not going to forget your sins. You'll be hearing from me--this was just a technicality. *(storms out)*

Narrator: Gilda Guilty has been pardoned from her sin, and that not of herself, it was a gift. She didn't earn it, her good works didn't sway the judge, and she certainly didn't deserve it. But nonetheless, Jesus, commending His love toward Gilda while she was still a sinner, gladly stepped in to die in her place, and Gilda wisely accepted His amazing offer. How will Gilda's life change? Will she still wear orange? Will she remember to be grateful for the great forgiveness she so freely received? Will she impart the grace she has received on her mother-in-law, poor Arnold, and others in her life?



"YOUR DAY IN COURT" - ACT 4 OUR PARDON AND FREEDOM (Part 2)

Setting: Prosecutor sitting at desk, reading from his file. Gilda sitting at her table, head in her hands. Janitor with broom to arrive.

Characters:

Narrator/Bailiff

Defendant Gilda Guilty - wearing orange (as in jail garb)

Janitor - with broom

Narrator: In court earlier today, in an unexpected turn of events, Gilda Guilty was informed that someone had come forward and offered His life as a substitute for Ms. Guilty, taking upon Himself all of her sin and forthcoming punishment. If Gilda accepted His offer, she would be considered pardoned and was free to go. Of course, Gilda jumped at the chance and accepted His offer. However, the prosecutor did not like losing the case, and promised to continue to pursue her conviction. He did not even leave the courtroom after the end of the trial...

Prosecutor: (*reading charges*)

- June 3, 1986, Gilda hits her little brother after not sharing her toys
- June 5, 1986, Gilda deliberately disobeys when her mom instructs her to clean her room
- September 12, 1991, Gilda cheats on a spelling test
- October 5, 1995, Gilda lies to her mom about where she and her friends are going
- November 10, 1996, Gilda lies about her age and goes to a "R" rated movie
- Thanksgiving, 1998 Gilda left the Thanksgiving table insulted and angry
- Christmas 2002 - Gilda buys her mom the shoes she herself wanted so that she can borrow them
- April 5, 2003 - Gilda realized she wasn't charged for the water bottles in the bottom of her cart and didn't go back to pay what was owed
- July 5, 2005 - Gilda lied told the panhandler she had no money
- September 12, 2010 - Gilda blamed her husband for overdrawn bank account
- Feb. 2, 2015 - Gilda gossiped about her two best friends in order to look good herself
- June 17, 2018 - Gilda roasted the pastor after his Sunday sermon

Gilda: (*responding to the various charges*)

He deserved that!

That was so long ago!

I needed a good grade on that test!

I just really wanted to go!

It was a good movie with only a few bad words!

Anyone would have reacted to that!
I was just being thrifty!
It was the cashier's fault--I didn't try to hide it from her
He would have just bought alcohol
That was during an emotional time of the month
You don't know my side of the story
Everyone was doing it!

Janitor arrives, sweeping up, and looks surprised. prosecutor leaves, but leaves his stack of papers

Janitor: (to Gilda) What are you doing here? The courtroom is closed. The judge went home hours ago. There is no more condemnation. Look around--there's no one here condemning you. You're the only one here.

Gilda: I know. I wanted to leave. The judge told me I was free to leave, but I keep hearing my list of sins. I feel so bad. I was guilty, and I can't let go of the guilt and shame. I'm afraid it will never end for me.

Janitor: Wait just a second. I'm pretty sure I heard that you were that terrible sinner who was pardoned.

Gilda: I am that terrible sinner.

Janitor: You know what that means, right? A pardon means that you are free and absolved of that conviction, as if you were never convicted. The court no longer remembers or has record of your sin.

Gilda: Well, I do have a pardon, but I know what I did. I deserve to be punished. I can't get the Prosecutor's voice out of my head; he harasses me constantly, reminding me of all my sins and failures. His accusations are all true.

Janitor: But he is a known liar!

Gilda: No, what he is saying is all true. I hear the list of charges over and over, and there are hundreds of sins he hasn't even mentioned yet--and I did them all. I have regrets, but I did them.

Janitor: Maybe the accusations are true, but apparently he is deceiving you about your pardon. You are free and clear, as if you never sinned. Why in the world are you still here listening to him? Go home. That's what I plan to do after my shift is over. This is my last room to clean tonight. Look at this mess! All these accusations--they're trash now. I'm going to incinerate these, and you shouldn't listen again to any of these accusations ever again. You should be focusing on the One who paid the price for your

sins and set you free. He deserves your worship and attention, and not the one who wanted you taken captive and sentenced to death row.

Gilda: That's right. Giving my life as a living sacrifice--that's my reasonable service. I'm going to take your advice and focus my attention on living a life of gratitude that would be pleasing to the One who died for me, so His sacrifice for me isn't in vain.

Janitor: I'm just about finished here. Here, you take this stack of accusations and sins and I'll walk with you to the incinerator. I'll let you drop them in!

Narrator: I think Gilda finally understands what is behind the pardon that she was given. She understands the magnitude of the sacrifice that made her freedom possible. Without Jesus, she was hopeless, helpless and condemned. By accepting His sacrifice as the punishment for the charges against her, she was able to walk out of the courtroom today a free woman, free from the shackles of guilt and shame, free from continued condemnation and free to share her story of deliverance from sin.