

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: *Next case!*

BAILIFF: “*God and the Kingdom of Heaven and Earth versus Judas Iscariot*”!

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Bailiff!!!!

BAILIFF: She got a writ signed by God, sir.

SAINT MONICA: *Signed, Sealed, Delivered, mothahfuckah! Peace!!*

CUNNINGHAM: Here is the writ, Your Honor—note the signature at the bottom.

SAINT MONICA *and* JUDAS *vanish*.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Bailiff!! Bailiff!! Where’s El-Fajita?

EL-FAYOUMY *rises with panache*.

EL-FAYOUMY: Present and accounted for and dripping with anticipation to defend with marvelous cunning and great relish the Kingdom of Heaven and Earth and your great sir-ness against the Satan-spawned traitor Judas Iscariot and his beguiling but outlandishly misguided counsel, most eminently great and rakishly handsome great sir!!!

*Beat.*

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD (*re: the writ*): Cunningham, I do not like it when lawyers go over my head.

CUNNINGHAM: You gave me no choice.

EL-FAYOUMY: *Objection, Your Honor!!!* As human beings, we always have choice! Motion to strike!

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Mr. El-Fajita, you are aware that the trial hasn’t actually begun yet, right?

EL-FAYOUMY: Uh ... Yes ... Right. Of course. I was merely, uh ... Yes, sir ...

EL-FAYOUMY *sheepishly sits*.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: “Fabiana” “Aziza” “Cunningham,” that right?

CUNNINGHAM: It is.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: So where's the red hair and freckles, Cunningham?

CUNNINGHAM: My mother was a Romanian Gypsy who settled in Vinegar Hill in Harlem in the 1960s.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: And your father?

CUNNINGHAM: A local parish priest.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Got more than his palm read, did he? All right, then, Cunningham, I think it only fair at this juncture to tell you some things about myself, things that may, perhaps, inspire you to take your little mission elsewhere. For example, I strongly dislike Tapioca Pudding—

EL-FAYOUMY (*rising*): Tapioca, the worst, I spit on it!

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Sidddown!!

(*to CUNNINGHAM*): But even more than Tapioca, Cunningham, I dislike the following: Defense Attorneys as a rule, half-breeds in general, and Judas Iscariot as anything other than a cautionary tale. Now that a problem for you?

CUNNINGHAM: No.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: You ever met God, Cunningham?

CUNNINGHAM: I don't know that I believe in God.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: You've just handed me a writ signed by Him, and, yet, you don't know if you believe?

CUNNINGHAM: Correct.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Well, what if God appeared to you, Cunningham? Just one day, boom! God: White Beard, Flowing Robe, The Whole Rack a Lamb.

CUNNINGHAM: Your Honor—

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: What if you were to go home tonight, Cunningham, and Jesus Christ himself were to greet you at your door with a dozen Krispy Kremes and a quart of cold milk and say: "Cunningham. Fabiana. It's me. I really am that thing that you've always feared more than doubted"—what would you do?

CUNNINGHAM: Your Honor—

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: And what if you let him in, Cunningham, and you sat down with The Man for just, say, three minutes? And you could touch him and inspect him and interrogate him all you want and have him do miracles and tell you the exact story of your life, and you ended up

convinced—convinced, Cunningham—wiping away tears of joy and relief on your living-room couch. If he *proved* it to you, Cunningham, would you believe then?

CUNNINGHAM: If he proved it, I suppose I would have to.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: After only three minutes?

CUNNINGHAM: But that would never happen—

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Cunningham, you're the cynical, faithless spawn of a Crackpot Gypsy and a Defrocked Mick—yet you just told me Jesus would have you on your knees in three minutes.

CUNNINGHAM: So?

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: So consider this: Your friend Judas? He had Jesus for three *years*! Think about that, Cunningham. Three years in the foxhole with the best friend ya ever had, then he shot him in the back for a pack of Kools. Think what that says about the essential character of the man. Now go home and stir *that* into your wee Gypsy teapot! *Petition's invalid, Motion denied! Next case!*

EL-FAYOUMY: Pure genius! I am erect!

CUNNINGHAM: Your Honor, this petition is signed by *God!*

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Yeah, but it ain't signed by your client, now, is it?

CUNNINGHAM: My client is catatonic, he's incapable of signing.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: If he's catatonic, then how do you know he wants an appeal in the first place?

CUNNINGHAM: Who couldn't want to appeal "eternal damnation"?

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Someone who was aware of his own self-inflicted erosion of the capacity to be filled by Grace ... Someone too prideful to ask for forgiveness even in the face of the fiery furnace. Or maybe, he don't bother askin', 'uz he knows he don't deserve it!

CUNNINGHAM: Your Honor, the only person who *needs* forgiveness is the one who doesn't deserve it.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Then let him ask!

CUNNINGHAM: I'm asking for him!

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: *Out of my courtroom, sister, and may God have mercy on your blasted arrogant soul!* Now get thee back Uptown, woman. Stop your rabble-rousing, and get humble—'cuz you ain't gonna get to Heaven by trying to dismantle the Natural Order of Things that the good lord has so thoughtfully put together!!!

CUNNINGHAM: Your Honor, are you a citizen of Heaven?

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Bailiff! Remove this woman!

CUNNINGHAM: You live here with us—you know no more about God's Law than anyone else in this court!

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: My papers are pending—I'll be up there any day now.

CUNNINGHAM: Your papers have been pending since 1864, Your Honor, that's a hundred and forty years—

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD:—If there's an insinuation at the end of that statement, Cunningham, I suggest you don't make it!

CUNNINGHAM: Not an insinuation, Your Honor, but a question: If the "truth" really does set us free, then what is it, Your Honor, that is progressively precluding your capacity to respond to the call of that truth? Because "a hundred and forty years" suggests to me that you are moving not closer, but farther and farther away from it every day!

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: What the hell does "Judas Iscariot" have to do with my truth, Cunningham? I didn't hang myself from some olive branch!

CUNNINGHAM: Not from an olive branch, but on a battlefield in northern Georgia in 1864. Allatoona. And the tree—Oak, I believe. Your Honor, I have to wonder what your honest answer will be, when you are someday asked how different you are now from that day when you died?

*An uncomfortable pause.*

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: ... Tomorrow morning. Nine a.m. That work for you?

CUNNINGHAM: It does.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD (to BAILIFF): Put it on the docket.

BAILIFF: Docket?

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: just write it down!

BAILIFF: Um ...

*BAILIFF takes out a pen and scribbles on his hand.*

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: Anything else, Fabiana Aziza Cunningham?

CUNNINGHAM: No, Your Honor.

JUDGE LITTLEFIELD: *Next fuckin' Case!!!!!!*