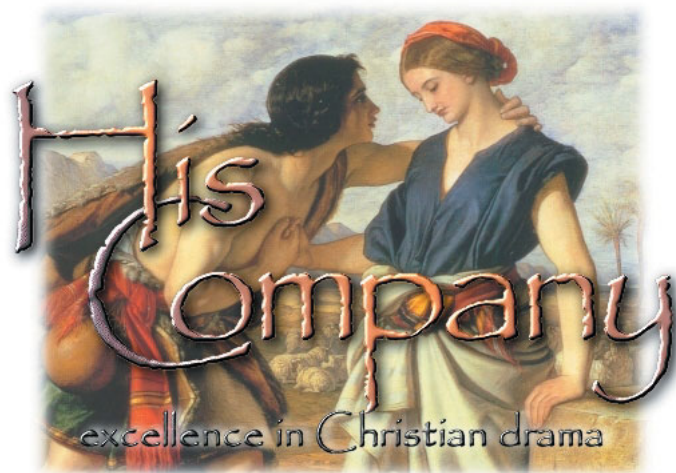


No MAN CONDEMNNS YOU

A MONOLOGUE

by
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AUTHOR'S NOTE

5 The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the center of the court, they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act. "Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?" They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground. But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center of the court. Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more." John 8:3-11 (NASB-U)

10
15 Imagine, if you will, a modern setting for this story from John's Gospel. Imagine Jesus walking the earth in OUR time, instead of almost 2,000 years ago. And imagine this woman feeling the stones of our own hypocrisy and the loving forgiveness of the Savior.

SCENE

20 *The woman enters and addresses the church congregation. She is in modern dress, Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes—but just a little on the tacky side, as if she has not totally abandoned her earlier manners of dress. Maybe she is wearing a little too much makeup; maybe she has done her hair in a way that makes her look a little like a floozy; maybe her skirt is a little too tight, or too short; maybe her colors are on the loud side for a Sunday service.*

Woman

25 *(after a brief pause, during which she gazes steadily upon her audience)*
I met Him at our church picnic. Most of the members thought I wouldn't show up at all, but I did. You can't really blame them. There was more gossip in the church about me than anyone else—and most of it was true. In fact, there were some things they hadn't even discovered yet. You see,
30 I've never been what you might call a... virtuous woman. I've had several husbands—and many in between. People like to talk—and they usually do. So when I joined this church word got out really fast.

(more darkly, reliving the depression of her earlier life)
35 I was at the bottom. I was sick of my life and sick of the consequences. I needed to start fresh—start over. And I thought, where better than at a church. Oh, they let me stay and they shook my hand and once in awhile even gave me a little hug. But I could feel their uneasiness. Most of them wished I would just slip away and never come back. Well, I didn't. And I even went to the picnic.

40 (pause)

Jesus was the guest of honor—

(parenthetically)

—though many were as uneasy around Him as they were around me.

(brightening)

45 He had a wonderful time. He joined in the sack-race, dunked for apples, played with the kids...

(more seriously)

It was later in the day that it happened. Most of the adults were sitting around the picnic tables, drinking coffee and chatting about the weather.

50 Jesus was in the middle of them—I was off to the side. The talk got around to the church membership—and I guess they didn't notice me sitting there. One of the men, thinking to impress Jesus, said something about how fine and upstanding the membership used to be—before certain elements slipped in. Then one of the women quickly agreed,

55 (ashamed)

even mentioning my name.

I was so embarrassed, I just wanted to run away. But I was frozen. I couldn't move. I hoped no one would notice me—especially Jesus. I didn't want Him to see me. But He did.

60 (pause)

There was nervous laughter round the table, but Jesus didn't join in. Suddenly it was quiet. In a strong voice, Jesus said: "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the one to condemn this woman."

(pause)

65 No one spoke. In fact, some got up and slipped away from the table, ashamed. Jesus turned, and with such tender love and compassion, he smiled at me and said: "No man here condemns you. And neither do I. Go, and leave behind your life of sin."

70 *She exits.*

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