

Scene 7

Judges' office. There is a coat rack, a desk with a chair for the judge and one in front of his desk. Various books, briefs are on the desk, it is too orderly and neat. He removes his trench-coat and begins putting on his robe. Enter Counselor.

Counselor:

Your Honor, Counselor Nguyen with Swihart and Franíc. May I have a moment?

Judge:

You have two minutes, counselor.

Counselor:

We filed a petition of non-disclosure for our client, Jason Netherman.

Judge:

Yes. And?

Counselor:

I wanted to check its status.

Judge:

How come I haven't seen you around?

Counselor:

It's my first case for the firm.

Judge:

Swihart & Franíc, that's a good firm.

Counselor:

Thank you, your Honor.

Judge:

But, I'm not approving your client's request.

Counselor:

Excuse me, your Honor?

Judge:

I know he will be a repeat offender.

Counselor:

He hasn't broken a law in the past two years.

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So?

Judge:

He has volunteered in his own community.

Counselor:

He committed an act of public lewdness.

Judge:

The law says he can request this.

Counselor:

I have the right to deny it.

Judge:

He has a right to have his record sealed.

Counselor:

He is a gay man, is he not?

Judge:

Yes, your honor.

Counselor:

Trust me, he will repeat this offense.

Judge:

Your Honor!

Counselor:

They always do, counselor.

Judge:

You sentenced him.

Counselor:

I should have thrown him in jail.

Judge:

You terminated his deferred adjudication early.

Counselor:

He'll be just another pervert in the park.

Judge:

Counselor:

Your Honor. He finished the terms of his case in four months.

Judge:

He broke the law, plain and simple.

Counselor:

Your Honor, he deserves-

Judge:

I am not here to be tested.

Counselor:

I'm not here to question.

Judge:

It's discretionary.

Counselor:

His volunteer work is outstanding.

Judge:

I've heard it all before, counselor.

Counselor:

He is a model citizen.

Judge:

It's falderal before an unsympathetic court.

Counselor:

It's a chance for him to get his life back.

Judge:

So?

Counselor:

Is it an election year for you, your Honor?

Judge:

I can't see how this would be relevant.

Counselor:

You wouldn't want to be seen as 'soft' on sex crimes.

Judge:

I am offended by your remark Counselor. I would tread lightly.

Counselor:

Your constituents are conservative, and if you give him this and he slides, it would tarnish you, wouldn't it?

Judge:

You're fresh out of school, aren't you?

Counselor:

Yes, your Honor.

Judge:

You barely passed your bar exam, and you dare broach this subject with me?

Counselor:

I am doing what is best for my client.

Judge:

As I am doing what is in the best interest for my constituents.

Counselor:

He has given back so much time to his community.

Judge:

Then why do you wrestle with this so much counselor?

Counselor:

...

Judge:

Is it because you want your first win in the courtroom?

Counselor:

He deserves a second chance.

Judge:

That is rather noble of you.

Counselor:

How can I defend my client if I do not know who his adjudicator would be?

Judge:

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Act One/Scene 7

Well noted.

Counselor:

Is there anything I can do?

Judge:

Letters of support from community leaders.

Counselor:

Your Honor?

Judge:

Nine a.m., the day before his appointment. Minimum five.

Counselor:

Your honor?

Judge:

Shall we make it ten?

Counselor:

Five will be fine, your Honor.

Judge:

If your client is the angel that you say he is, the letters will be easy to attain.

Counselor:

...

Judge:

Spit it out, counselor.

Counselor:

I am not giving up on him.

Judge:

Is that affection for your client? Oh, you'll lose cases, counselor. You should keep a professional distance.

Counselor:

Yes, your Honor.

Judge:

He is a criminal.

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Act One/Scene 7

He deserves-

Counselor:

I am due in court.

Judge:

I'll appeal.

Counselor:

Your pride is an affront to my decision.

Judge:

I meant no disrespect.

Counselor:

You people are good with numbers aren't you?

Judge:

That is uncalled for.

Counselor:

Judge:
Want to know what is called for? Five letters, on my desk-or in my hand twenty-four hours before he appears in my court. Otherwise, I won't look at him sideways. Your time is up. Be thankful.

Judge exits. Blackout.