

*Pardon Me* by CJ Hernandez

EXT. 18th CENTURY COLONIAL AMERICA

The MAYOR, the EXECUTIONER lady, and the PRISONER(hands bound) stand by the gallows. The MAYOR reads from a scroll.

MAYOR (old southern)

Jonathan Barrows, you stand before us having been found guilty of the following crimes. Number one, practicing witchcraft in the name of the dark lord Satan himself.

PRISONER(modern american)

For the last time, I don't practice witchcraft, I practice law.

MAYOR

SILENCE, WITCH! Number TWO, CONSPIRING to commit HIGH TREASON against, ME. THE MAYOR. PERSONALLY.

PRISONER

Oh. Oh! Is THAT what this is about?

MAYOR

AND NUMBER THREE, the most heinous crime of all... FRATERNIZING with the DARK LORD LUCIFER himself.

PRISONER

Well, that's not a nice way to refer to your wife, sir.

MAYOR

For these crimes, YOU ARE HEREBY SENTENCED... TO BE HANGED. TO DEATH.

The EXECUTIONER starts loudly singing the Funeral March

EXECUTIONER

BUMMM, BUMMM, BABUMMM, BUMMM,  
BABAAAM, BAM BAM, BAM BAMMMMM...

MAYOR

Approach the rope, and may God  
have mercy on your soul

The PRISONER shuffles towards the EXECUTIONER. As he does,  
he bumps into the MAYOR

PRISONER

Oops, sorry, pardon me.

MAYOR

Quite alright, you are pardoned.

PRISONER

AHA! YOU PARDONED ME! I'M FREE TO  
GO!

MAYOR

Wait, what!? But that's not-

PRISONER

You said it, "you are pardoned!"

EXECUTIONER

You did say that.

MAYOR

But that's not what I meant!

PRISONER

But it's what you said! Letter of  
the law, Mister Mayor. I'm  
pardoned, I'm innocent, I'm off  
scott-free.

MAYOR (flustered)

I, well, what, I... You are  
unpardoned! I unpardon you!

PRISONER

Nope, no can do Mister Mayor,  
Double Jeopardy!

MAYOR

What?

EXECUTIONER

Double Jeopardy, you can't try him  
for the same crime twice.

MAYOR

Oh, what do YOU know, you're just the executioner.

EXECUTIONER

Yes, but I'm also judge and jury.

MAYOR

Fine, fine, throw him back in jail, we'll just search his house-

PRISONER

On what probable cause? With what warrant?

MAYOR

Well then we'll interrogate you until you confess.

PRISONER

Not without my lawyer present.

MAYOR

YOU **ARE** A LAWYER!!!

PRISONER

[beat] Am I being detained?

MAYOR

.....Yes?

PRISONER

Am I being detained?

MAYOR

...Yes. Yes you-

PRISONER

AM I BEING DETAINED!?

EXECUTIONER

You can't detain him, sir.

MAYOR

(quietly fuming)

PRISONER

Am I free to go?

MAYOR  
(almost inaudibly) .....yes.

PRISONER  
Am I free to go?

MAYOR  
YES. FINE. YES. GO.

The executioner unties the PRISONER's hands.

PRISONER  
You're not getting out of  
tomorrow's divorce hearing that  
easily. Your wife and I will see  
you in court.

The PRISONER begins to walk off stage, then stops and  
points at the audience.

PRISONER  
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS! Have you been  
unfairly treated by the  
government? Then you need me, Jon  
Barrows, Attorney at-

MAYOR  
WE GET IT. You're soooo smart, get  
over it you smug jerkwad.

Exit PRISONER, as he makes a "call me" gesture to the  
audience.

MAYOR  
[sigh] Lawyers! I really thought  
that would work. Ah well, there's  
always tomorrow. The hearing is at  
4pm, honey?

EXECUTIONER  
This is why we're getting  
divorced.

MAYOR  
You're still my wife until  
tomorrow!

EXECUTIONER (sarcasm)  
You know, it seems like such a  
waste to set up this execution for

nothing, would you like to take it  
for a spin?

MAYOR

Ah, there's that gallows humor I  
know and love. Literally gallows  
humor!

EXECUTIONER

Ugh, kill me now.

MAYOR

Oh I've tried but I'm afraid  
that's your job.

**END**