

The Trial written by Leigh Riches.

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# The Trial

## Characters.

**The Prosecutor**, Mr Tasan : A hard nosed lawyer, the Accuser. Very sure of himself with his ultimate goal to prove people guilty of Sin, and therefore not accepted by God.

**The Judge** : Fair, Serious and merciful. He waits patiently for people to confess that they are guilty of sin, and then allows them to experience the forgiveness and substitution which Christ offers.

## The Defendants -

**Simon Arden**: An accountant. Confident, outspoken, self righteous and argumentative.

**Kylie Mitchell**: single, young, likes new clothes and the latest things. Part-time sales assistant.

**Tim Ryan**: Mechanic. A really nice guy, doesn't appear to have done anything wrong to anyone, and this hinders him from seeing his need for forgiveness.

**Reader** : The narrator dressed in black, appears centre stage in spot and start and end of drama.

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## ACT1 scene1 - the crucifixion

VIDEO SEQUENCE 1 - from **Jesus Video** - shown from trial to crucifixion of Christ. 5-8min's.

Scripture reading / Narrative from Romans 3.10 - 19

**Reader**: The Scriptures say,

"No one is good--  
not even one.

No one has real understanding;  
no one is seeking God.

**All have turned away from God;**  
all have gone wrong.

No one does good,  
not even one."

" Their speech is filled with lies."

"Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness."

They do not know what true peace is."

"They have no fear of God to restrain them."

Obviously, the law applies to those to whom it was given, for its purpose is to keep people from having excuses and to bring **the entire world into judgment before God.**

[ lights down ]

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## ACT1 scene2

Video Sequence 2 - A shopping mall

**This scene needs to be shot before-hand in a shopping mall.** three short (30sec-1minute) clips of each of the three main characters in the mall. Simon Arden is sitting reading a newspaper, Kylie is shopping for clothes and Tim is drinking and reading a magazine. In each case the camera zooms in on them, the frame freezes and their name and title appears - (*Simon Arden, Accountant*”, *Kylie Peterson, Part-time Sales assistant*” and *Tim Ryan, Mechanic*” at the appropriate time). After the title appears the character ‘magically disappears from frame, leaving a newspaper sitting on the table (etc. - this is done with stop-start videoing and editing out the in-between scenes) repeat this for Kylie and Tim. **Alternately this could be done live on stage with lighting.**

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**ACT 1 Scene 3 - A courtroom scene.** The judge is toward the back of stage elevated behind a pulpit with some books and a gavel. There is a small stand with microphone for the defendants (currently empty), and the three defendants are sitting on stools, handcuffed, but wearing the same clothes as is the video sequence. AS the lights come up, the three defendants are unsure of where they are, and confused at their apparent ‘snatching away’ to this courtroom. The prosecutor is standing toward the front behind a table which contains his papers and books and is about to make his opening speech...

[ lights up ]

( The defendants express their confusion with phrases such as “What’s going on”, “Where am I”, “How did I get here”, “who are you” “I don’t understand” etc....)

Judge (banging gavel) Order, thank you, Order..... Mr Tasan, as head of the prosecution you may want to explain to the defendants exactly why you have brought them into my court.

(murmurs again from the defendants)

Prosecution The reason, your honor, for bringing these three ordinary people before you today is to prove that they, like all people are **guilty of breaking the law.**

Simon Look.... if this is about those parking fines.....

Prosecution no, Mr Arden, this case is much more serious than parking fines.

Tim Well, what law have we broken then?

Prosecution The law you have broken Mr Ryan, is God’s law (holds up a Bible)

Kylie What do you mean God’s law - are we.... are we **dead** or something?

Prosecution No, you are very much alive Miss Mitchell, but if found guilty today, your punishment will be **worse** than death....

Simon Whoa..... punishment??

Judge Mr Tasan, as prosecutor, you know full well that it is not within the power of this court to issue, or decide punishment. Our duty today is only to decide if the defendants are guilty of the charge brought before them. They will not realize their punishment until they do die, and only then if they die guilty.

Simon: You know.... this is sounding pretty weird,... and I don’t have any idea what you’re talking about here...

Judge Mr Tasan I am assuming you will be able to qualify your allegations against these defendants.

Prosecution certainly you Honor, and In doing so I would like to call the first defendant Mr. Arden to the stand.

[ lights down ]

( This could be a point for a song perhaps??)

ACT 2 scene 1 “**The Sin**”

( The stools are now more to one side of the stage with the small podium central)

*Simon Arden is behind the small podium with the microphone stand, facing the audience, slightly toward the prosecution, the prosecutor is now in front of his desk with his papers in hand, which he glances at regularly during the course of the questioning.*

[ lights up ]

Prosecution (with Bible) Mr Arden, do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

Simon Uh... yeah...

Prosecution (Snapping the Bible shut) let’s consider this idea of telling the truth Mr Arden.... .Is that something that you **always** do?

Simon Well... .yeah... I guess so.... what does this have to do with breaking the law though....

Prosecution (smugly) Tell me about last Friday Mr Arden.

Simon What... What about last Friday?

Prosecution You rang in sick to work,... what was the problem?

Simon Well.... you know, I guess technically um... well, you see....

Prosecution We’re waiting

Simon Well,... Ok..... so I wasn’t actually sick, but ... it wasn’t a lie... It was just, kind of... changing things around a little....

Prosecution You were water skiing Mr Arden.... but while we’re on the subject of “changing things a little” as you have so eloquently put it. What about changing your income on your tax return, what about changing the hours on your time sheet, what about changing things here or there to make yourself sound a little bit better and smarter than you really are.

Simon (angrily) Look.... I don’t get this... I don’t know why you’re going on about all these.... these insignificant little things that don’t hurt anybody, and that ... that everyone else does anyway. You say I’m here for breaking the law, and yet all you have against me is a few white lies and some slight exaggerations... If you call that breaking the law then you might as well get everyone up here... because everyone does that sort of thing... it just....normal, we all do it.

Prosecution Thankyou Mr Arden, That’s a very good point. That will be all, thank you.

(Simon hesitates, wanting to say more, but then moves back to his stool)

Prosecution I would now ask the second defendant, Kylie Mitchell to take the stand please.

(Kylie moves slowly toward the stand, she’s not as confident as Arden, and feels he has come off looking second best to the Prosecution, she’s fairly honest and open with her answers instead of trying to cover things up)

Prosecution (pacing to and fro) You've been rather quiet Miss Mitchell, What do you think of Mr Arden's defense?

Kylie Well.... he' probably *has* done things that are wrong.....I bet he's made lots of money out of it and got a nice car and house too.... doesn't seem fair for people like me.

Prosecution You work hard at your job don't you Miss Mitchell, (Kylie nods) , but you don't earn a great deal... not as much as others at your work, how does that make you feel?

Kylie ummm.... I guess,.. yeah, I get pretty annoyed about that. Especially when Sharon and Julie come in with all their new clothes and .... and Sharon brags about her new car... They should be the ones up here for getting all those things that they don't really deserve... things that should be....be.....

Prosecution Yours?

Kylie Well... yeah. I don't see why not... I want them.....uh.. deserve them more.

Prosecution So tell us Miss Mitchell, If you could have any of your colleagues possessions what would you want.

Kylie (on her hobby-horse) well.... to start with, I'd like all those pairs of shoes Julie's always wearing and... and all those DKNY clothes she just bought. And... well,.. I've kind of always wished my hair was like sharon's, so I'd be able to get that cute boyfriend of her's.... I mean **like** her's. And... like I said Sharon's new car looks *so* cute....

Prosecution (nodding) That's probably enough Miss Mitchell.

Kylie (surprised) Oh....so...why am I here (thinking).... **not** for... for wanting to have nice stuff, right... I mean there's nothing wrong with that... I don't.... understand what would be wrong with that, just wanting stuff that I ... should be able to have anyway... I mean everyone wants that right?

Prosecution (a little more gentle) Yes... everyone does Miss Mitchell... thank you that will be all.  
(Kylie hesitates at first and then makes her way thoughtfully back to her seat)

Prosecution That brings us to you Mr Ryan.. if you wouldn't mind coming to the stand.

Tim Sure. (Ryan is a nice guy and tries to be helpful, no matter what the circumstances)

Prosecution Mr Ryan,... you're a nice guy, honest, helpful.....why do you think you have been brought here today??

Tim well,.. to tell the truth I'm not sure exactly.

Prosecution Mr Ryan,.. you're an intelligent man, tell me - can you understand that **not doing** something you **have** been instructed to do, is just as wrong as **doing something** you have been instructed **not** to do?

Tim (thoughtfully & slowly) like... like if my kids have made a mess and I tell them to tidy it up... and they **don't** do it ..., well that's wrong isn't it, because they haven't done something I've told them to do.....(Prosecution nods) ..... And If I've told my kids **not to make a mess** in the **first** place ... and they **do**.... well that's... that's the same thing right?

Prosecution Exactly Mr. Ryan.... tell me, do you consider that you have done anything wrong, anything that would require you to be before this court today?

Tim well... no.(shaking head) Not really... that's what I don't understand, I mean I can kinda see what you've been saying to these other guys, but... well.. I don't wanna sound big headed but I'm not like that. I try and do the right thing, you know help out my mates and stuff - I don't really see why I'm here.

Prosecution tell me Mr Ryan, what things or people or... activities are most important to you - ... What's important in your life **right now?**

Tim Um... well I don't see what difference it makes but umm.... (thinking) Ok...uh... my Family...um...my job... my house.... just normal stuff,... I like to watch the game on Friday night with the guys... nothing wrong with all that stuff is there?

Prosecution No, Mr Ryan nothing at all. But tell me Mr Ryan... does God have any place in your life?

Tim God..... no,... not really... I don't know that.... I mean I went to church for a wedding last year but I'm not really into religion....

Prosecution no, no,no... I'm not talking about church or even religion.... I'm talking about God - Does he have a place in your life?

Tim Well.... no..... but... I don't get it... you're saying that because I **don't** have God in my life I'm doing something wrong, I'm breaking the law.... it.... doesn't make sense.

Prosecution Think about my first question Mr Ryan... that will be all. (to the Judge) Your honor I rest my case. I submit to your consideration these three defendants and strongly suggest that through their testimony brought before you today, that they are guilty of breaking God's Law.

Judge: Thankyou Mr Tasan, Court will adjourn for 10 minutes while I consider my decision.

[ Lights down ]

Message part A - Lyndon : maybe look at our Sin before God. Even if we we haven't committed the 'biggies' we are still sinful before God. Whether it's murder, lying, coveting, or simply not having God in your life - this is sin to God, breaking God's law and the wages of this sin is death & separation from God. Sometimes thinking that we are good can be the greatest thing separating us from God.

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ACT 3 scene 1 **"The Sentence"**

[ Lights up ]

Judge I have considered carefully each case brought before me and my verdict is as follows.

**Mr Simon Ardon**, Regarding the charge of breaking God's Law, I find you..... **Guilty** (*bang gavel*). (Ardon, lets out a few 'what' 'I can't believe it' etc)

**Miss Kylie Mitchell**, Regarding the charge of breaking God's Law, I find you..... **Guilty** (*bang gavel*).

**Mr Timothy Ryan**, Regarding the charge of breaking God's Law, I find you..... **Guilty** (*bang gavel*). (Ryan says a few things like 'what'... 'I don't understand this')

Before I finish this session I would like each one of you to respond to these charges briefly, and I implore each one of you to consider carefully your response, because this trial is by no means finite in its decision. Each one of you has the opportunity to reverse the decision of this court.

Prosecution Your Honor... I don't see this as being necessary in any way....

Judge That's quite enough Mr Tasan....Mr Arden if you could begin.

Simon (Takes the stand somewhat indignantly) Look,... I don't know what sort of court this really is but.... I fail to see the... the validity of these accusations to...to any law or any part of my life. What I do.... everyone else does.... and as far as I'm concerned I don't see anything wrong with it. What's the big deal with saying a few things that aren't completely true. I think this is just..... ridiculous. (steps down from podium and exits stage with handcuffs still on)

Judge (sadly) Miss Mitchell would you like to speak now.

(Mitchell begins to move, but before she does Ryan jumps up to the stand)

Tim (pleadingly) Look... I can't really understand any of this either, but I can kind if see that what that other guy does was... .wrong in some way. But I think there's been a mistake with my case. I... I shouldn't even be here... maybe there's another Tim Ryan or something, but I haven't done anything wrong. There was nothing that this... this prosecutor has been able to point at me, I haven't done anything wrong and so I just can't accept the verdict of this court. - I'm sorry. (he exits, also still with handcuffs on)

Judge (finally) Miss Mitchell - Is there anything you would like to say in your defense?

Kylie Well.... at first I had a lot to say but..... well..... no. There's nothing I can say. I am sometimes preoccupied with what other people have and .... well I didn't know it was like a crime or anything, but if that's what I'm charged with... then... I guess I am guilty of it. But ... your Honor.... is there **anything I can do** that .... that can change your decision?

Judge No Miss Mitchell.....(pause) however there is something that God has done. Although you **are** guilty of breaking God's Law, God has done something about it. God doesn't want to force you to do anything but rather he wants you to understand that you are guilty before him. Not only that, God has done something about your guilt - he placed it upon his Son Jesus Christ. He substituted his Son for you Kylie and says that if you believe in Him, and accept Jesus as Your Saviour, then your guilt will be paid for by Jesus death upon the cross. I can't make you, force you or tell you to do this - It's a decision that you alone have to make. This court is adjourned. (Judge & Prosecution exit stage)

(15 sec of Crucifixion scene from **Jesus video** plays again - Freezes with close up of Jesus face saying :Father forgive them for they know not what they do....)

[ light low with spot on Kylie]

Kylie looks toward screen, after a few seconds her **handcuffs fall off**

[Lights down]

[ Lights up ]

narration - Romans 3.19 - 25a (PART 2 - End)

**Reader:**

The law applies to those to whom it was given, for its purpose is to keep people from having excuses and to bring the entire world into judgment before God.

For no one can ever be made right in God's sight by doing what his law commands. For the more we know God's law, the clearer it becomes that we aren't obeying it.

But now God has shown us a different way of being right in his sight--not by obeying the law but by the way promised in the Scriptures long ago. We are made right in God's sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins.

And we all can be saved in this same way, no matter who we are or what we have done. **For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard.** Yet now God in his gracious kindness declares us not guilty. He has done this **through Christ Jesus**, who has freed us by taking away our sins. For God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to satisfy God's anger against us. We are made right with God when we believe that **Jesus shed his blood, sacrificing his life for us.**

End.

The Pastor / Speaker ties up the night with "**The Saviour**" - What Christ has done at the time we celebrate as Easter, we can't do anything ourselves - it's already been done and all we need to do is accept that Christ has done it for us as individuals. we have a decision to make - we are the only ones who can make that decision, and the time is now.