



OF THE JUDGMENTS THEY MAKE

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas
B.S. Medical Technology

One of the most watched events of the past year was the rendering of judgment on the country's highest magistrate. Watching the distinguished lawmakers expound on the merits of the Chief Justice's case as against those presented by people who filed the impeachment case was a wonderful learning experience for me. However, after some time, I slowly grew tired of the endless justifications that seemed to progress ever so slowly, save for that delivered by one senator who acknowledged his inability to express himself in English and simply informed everyone of his judgment: Guilty. Had all the lawmakers decided to just utter that single word instead of hammering over and over again on a similar case many years ago, we would all have been able to focus on what we needed to do that day.

In my case, I had to beg off from online work because it took the greater part of the afternoon to watch the judgment proceedings. Of course, we can't blame our respected lawmakers for explaining themselves on their judgments. Everyone needed to know why they decided as they did. But hearing the same argument over and over can become annoying. Well, I guess that's just something they had to do, people. It wasn't upon us to hurry things up. The rendering of judgment was historic mainly because it was the country's Chief Magistrate that was to be judged. He was someone who had had years of experience rendering judgment on others, and was to be judged by those tasked to make laws that he was supposed to exercise judgment on. It was also ironic to see him in the dock.

Despite everything he was supposed to have done, I still consider the man a devoted family man. He was probably doing what he thought best to protect his own family's interests. However, because of the very fact that he knew the law and was supposed to be the go-to guy in efforts to uphold the constitution, what he did was still beyond accepting or comprehending. Getting away easily should not even have entered his mind. It should have hindered him from contemplating on doing what he was accused of doing.

Many years down the road, may we never find any of our lawmakers liable to be judged for acts that make a mockery of our country's constitution. They are lawmakers, they structure laws. There's always the risk that they know how to flout those laws they create. May they not be judged as they have judged, for that will surely be a sad day once more. As we elect future leaders in May this year, may we use wise judgment and clear discernment of every candidate's real purpose: is it to serve or to use their positions to serve their own selfish ends?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Has there ever been a particular event in your country's past or present history where a political leader or government official was sentenced? Be able to talk about it in class.
2. How do you think someone being judged feels? Elaborate on your answer.
3. How can errors of judgment be avoided in life? Cite specific examples as needed.
4. What qualities/characteristics should a judge possess? Be able to expound on each quality/characteristic.
5. Should personal criteria affect the rendering of judgment? Why or why not?