



Judge Judy Found Me GUILTY

by Susan Gilbert

Judge Judy found me guilty in front of 10 million viewers worldwide. If Judge Judy says I am, then I guess it's true. Right?

This is a story – my story – about how life challenges us in surprising and unforeseen ways. About life's outward appearances and our opportunities to believe something different. This is a story about overcoming obstacles and making choices. And yes, this is a true story.

Many who are reading this already know who I am. But for those who don't, a short introduction will help you gain perspective for the tale which is about to be told.

I'm a serial entrepreneur. I love envisioning, creating, and growing new businesses. My first entrepreneurial endeavor happened quite by accident when I created a new revenue stream for an existing technology business. I brought an idea to that company and they let me run with it on the stipulation that as long as we all made money, I had a job. It was a wild success.

My second endeavor was mine alone, a start-up, and in an entirely new market for me – the restaurant industry. Eighty-five percent of new businesses fail in the first year, and that number is even higher in the food industry. I had never even held a job in a restaurant, yet I survived and grew. After only two years, I had five thriving retail locations, and 88 employees. Wholesale and catering departments were part of the business structure.

In the mid 1990s, I tried my hand at several e-commerce sites, two of which I still maintain today. I also began a jewelry line called the Unity Collection. In 1999, I formed my own publishing company, Unity Products and Press, and published a book entitled, "The Land of I Can." It became a #1 best seller on Amazon.com®, and I still receive bulk orders from schools around the country.

People began to ask me how I created such ongoing successes. What I hear so often is the "I Had No Idea" syndrome – would-be entrepreneurs who don't realize what's truly involved with running a business. All of my entrepreneurial

