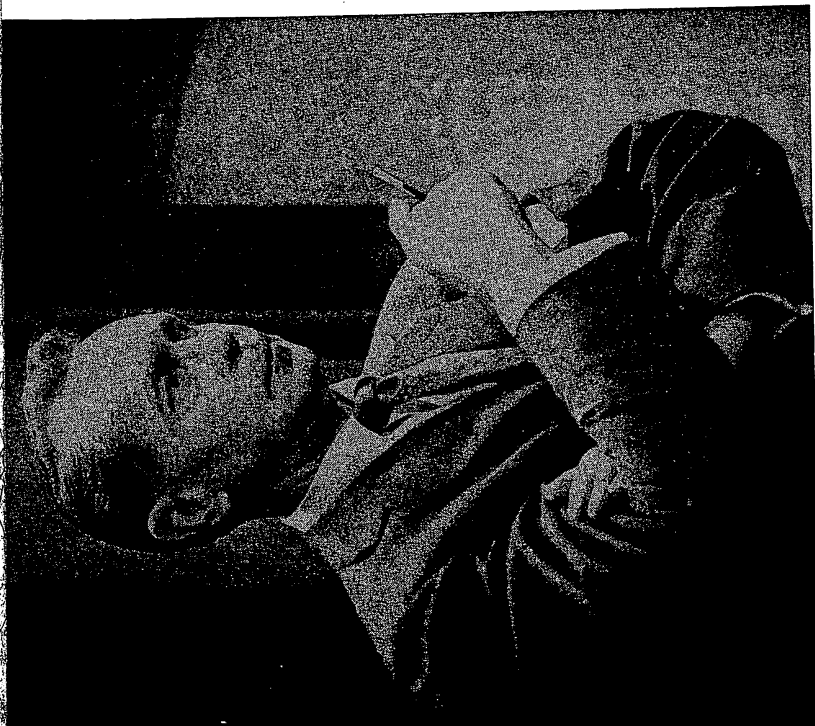


EDWARD ARNOLD



FRANCHOT TONE

as they appeared on television in the Studio One production of "Twelve Angry Men"

A Play in Three Acts

# Twelve Angry Men

by

REGINALD ROSE

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Stage Version by SHERMAN L. SERGEL

Adapted from the Television

Show of the Same Name

Initially presented on

STUDIO ONE, CBS-TV



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[TWELVE ANGRY MEN]

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## Twelve Angry Men

*A Play in Three Acts*

FOR FIFTEEN MEN

### CHARACTERS

FOREMAN OF THE JURY

JUROR NO. TWO

JUROR NO. THREE

JUROR NO. FOUR

JUROR NO. FIVE

JUROR NO. SIX

JUROR NO. SEVEN

JUROR NO. EIGHT

JUROR NO. NINE

JUROR NO. TEN

JUROR NO. ELEVEN

JUROR NO. TWELVE

GUARD (*bit part*)

JUDGE (*bit part*)

CLERK (*bit part*)

} *offstage voices*

PLACE: *A jury room.*

TIME: *The present. Summer.*

### SYNOPSIS

ACT ONE: *Late afternoon.*

ACT TWO: *A second or two later.*

ACT THREE: *Immediately following Act Two.*

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## NOTES ON CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

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**FOREMAN:** He is a small, petty man who is impressed with the authority he has and handles himself quite formally. He is not overly bright, but dogged.

**JUROR NO. TWO:** He is a meek, hesitant man who finds it difficult to maintain any opinions of his own. He is easily swayed and usually adopts the opinion of the last person to whom he has spoken.

**JUROR NO. THREE:** He is a very strong, very forceful, extremely opinionated man within whom can be detected a streak of sadism. Also, he is a humorless man who is intolerant of opinions other than his own, and accustomed to forcing his wishes and views upon others.

**JUROR NO. FOUR:** He seems to be a man of wealth and position, and a practiced speaker who presents himself well at all times. He seems to feel a little bit above the rest of the jurors. His only concern is with the facts in this case and he is appalled with the behavior of the others.

**JUROR NO. FIVE:** He is a naive, very frightened young man who takes his obligations in this case very seriously but who finds it difficult to speak up when his elders have the floor.

**JUROR NO. SIX:** He is an honest but dull-witted man who comes upon his decisions slowly and carefully. He is a man who finds it difficult to create positive opinions, but who must listen to and digest and accept those opinions offered by others which appeal to him most.

**JUROR NO. SEVEN:** He is a loud, flashy, glad-handed salesman type who has more important things to do than to sit on a jury. He is quick to show temper and equally quick to form opinions on things about which he knows nothing. He is a bully, and, of course, a coward.

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**JUROR NO. EIGHT:** He is a quiet, thoughtful, gentle man—a man who sees all sides of every question and constantly seeks the truth. He is a man of strength tempered with compassion. Above all, he is a man who wants justice to be done, and will fight to see that it is.

**JUROR NO. NINE:** He is a mild, gentle old man, long since defeated by life, and now merely waiting to die. He recognizes himself for what he is, and mourns the days when it would have been possible to be courageous without shielding himself behind his many years.

**JUROR NO. TEN:** He is an angry, bitter man—a man who antagonizes almost at sight. He is also a bigot who places no values on any human life save his own. Here is a man who has been nowhere and is going nowhere and knows it deep within him.

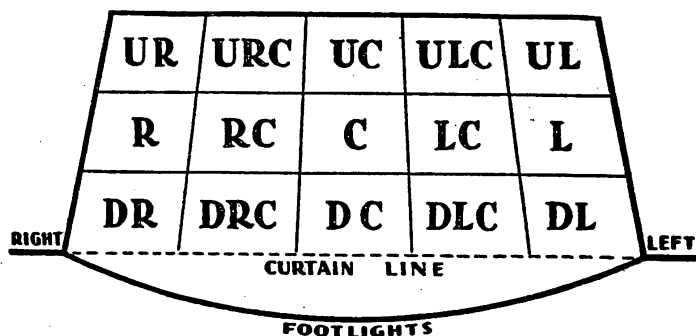
**JUROR NO. ELEVEN:** He is a refugee from Europe. He speaks with an accent and is ashamed, humble, almost subservient to the people around him. He will honestly seek justice because he has suffered through so much injustice.

**JUROR NO. TWELVE:** He is a slick, bright advertising man who thinks of human beings in terms of percentages, graphs and polls, and has no real understanding of people. He is a superficial snob, but trying to be a good fellow.

**GUARD:** This is a bit part. He can be any age and wears a uniform.

**COSTUMES:** The jurors wear everyday business clothes suitable for summer. **JUROR NO. FIVE** wears an expensively-tailored suit. **JUROR NO. SEVEN's** clothes are flashy. **JUROR NO. TWELVE** dresses smartly but in good taste.

## CHART OF STAGE POSITIONS

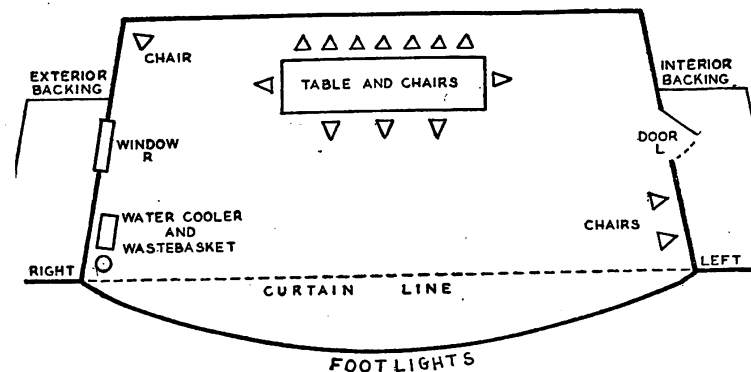


### STAGE POSITIONS

*Upstage* means away from the footlights, *downstage* means toward the footlights, and *right* and *left* are used with reference to the actor as he faces the audience. R means *right*, L means *left*, U means *up*, D means *down*, C means *center*, and these abbreviations are used in combination, as: U R for *up right*, R C for *right center*, D L C for *down left center*, etc. One will note that a position designated on the stage refers to a general territory, rather than to a given point.

**NOTE:** Before starting rehearsals, chalk off your stage or rehearsal space as indicated above in the *Chart of Stage Positions*. Then teach your actors the meanings and positions of these fundamental terms of stage movement by having them walk from one position to another until they are familiar with them. The use of these abbreviated terms in directing the play saves time, speeds up rehearsals, and reduces the amount of explanation the director has to give to his actors.

## STAGE CHART



### PROPERTIES

**GENERAL:** Long conference table and twelve chairs, electric clock, water cooler, container for paper cups, wastebasket, three other straight chairs, pads of paper, pencils and ashtrays on table. **NOTE:** Some of the jurors carry cigarettes and matches; JUROR NO. FIVE carries a pipe, matches and pouch of tobacco. Smoking is optional.

**SEVEN:** Pack of gum.

**GUARD:** Key for door, switch knife with tag, diagram of apartment.

**TEN:** Handkerchief.

**FOUR:** Comb, handkerchief, glasses.

**EIGHT:** Switch knife (identical to one brought in by Guard).

**TWO:** Box of cough drops, watch, glasses, handkerchief.

### PRODUCTION NOTE

Nothing adds more to the polish of a production than the quick picking up of cues. Unless there is a definite reason for a pause, train your actors to come in with their speeches "on the heels," so to speak, of the preceding speeches. When a production lags, audience interest likewise will lag.

It is always advisable during the last week of rehearsals to hold one or more sessions during which the actors merely sit around in a circle and go through lines only with the express purpose of snapping up cues.

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# ACT ONE

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AT RISE OF CURTAIN: *The curtain comes up on a dark stage; then as the lights start to come up on the scene we hear the voice of the JUDGE, offstage.*

JUDGE [*offstage*]. Murder in the first degree . . . premeditated homicide . . . is the most serious charge tried in our criminal courts. You have heard a long and complex case, gentlemen, and it is now your duty to sit down to try and separate the facts from the fancy. One man is dead. The life of another is at stake. If there is a reasonable doubt in your minds as to the guilt of the accused—then you must declare him not guilty. If—however—there is no reasonable doubt, then he must be found guilty. Whichever way you decide, the verdict must be unanimous. I urge you to deliberate honestly and thoughtfully. You are faced with a grave responsibility. Thank you, gentlemen.

[*There is a long pause. The lights are now up full in the jury room. There is a door L and a window in the R wall of the room. Over the door L is an electric clock. A water cooler is D R, with a wastebasket beside it. A container with paper cups is attached to the wall nearby. A long conference table is slightly upstage of C stage. About it are twelve uncomfortable-looking straight chairs. There is a chair at either end of the table, seven at the upstage side and three at the downstage side of the table. (NOTE: This arrangement of the chairs about the table will enable most of the action to be directed toward the audience, with a minority of the characters placed with their backs toward the audience.) There are two more straight chairs against the wall D L and one in the U R corner of the room. It is a bare, unpleasant room. After the pause the door L opens and the GUARD walks in. As he opens the door the lettering "Jury Room" can be seen*

on the outside of the door. The GUARD walks across the room and opens the window R as a clerk drones out, off-stage L.]

CLERK [offstage L]. The jury will retire.

GUARD [surveying room, shaking his head]. He doesn't stand a chance. [Moves L again.]

[The JURORS file in L. The GUARD stands upstage of the door and counts them. Four or five of the jurors light cigarettes as they enter the room. JUROR FIVE lights a pipe which he smokes constantly. JURORS TWO, NINE, and TWELVE go to the water cooler for a drink. JUROR SEVEN goes to the window and opens it wider. The rest of the JURORS begin to take seats around the table, though some of them stand and lean forward, with both hands on the back of the chair. JUROR SEVEN produces a pack of gum and offers a piece to the men by the water cooler.]

SEVEN. Chewing gum? Gum? Gum?

NINE. Thank you, but no. [JURORS TWO and TWELVE shake their heads.]

SEVEN. Y'know something?

TWELVE. I know lots of things. I'm in advertising.

SEVEN [tugging at collar]. Y'know, it's hot.

TWELVE [to TWO, mildly sarcastic]. I never would have known that if he hadn't told me. Would you?

TWO [missing sarcasm]. I suppose not. I'd kind of forgotten.

TWELVE. All I've done all day is sweat.

THREE [calling out]. I bet you aren't sweating like that kid who was tried.

SEVEN. You'd think they'd at least air-condition the place. I almost dropped dead in court.

TWELVE. My taxes are high enough.

SEVEN. This should go fast, anyway. [Moves to table, as EIGHT goes to window.]

NINE [nodding to himself, then, as he throws his paper water cup into wastebasket]. Yes, it's hot.

GUARD. Okay, gentlemen. Everybody's here. If there's anything you want, I'm right outside. Just knock. [Goes out L, closing door. They all look at door, silently. The lock is turned.]

THREE. Did he lock that door?

FOUR. Yes, he did.

THREE. What do they think we are, crooks?

FOREMAN [seated at left end of table]. They lock us up for a little while. . . .

THREE [breaking in]. And then they lock that kid up forever and that's okay by me.

FIVE [motioning toward door]. I never knew they did that.

TEN [blowing his nose]. Sure, they lock the door. What did you think?

FIVE [a bit irritated]. I just didn't know. It never occurred to me.

FOUR. Shall we all admit right now that it is hot and humid and our tempers are short?

EIGHT [turning from window]. It's been a pretty hard week. [Turns back and continues looking out.]

THREE. I feel just fine.

TWELVE. I wonder what's been going on down at the office.

You know how it is in advertising. In six days my job could be gone, and the whole company, too. They aren't going to like this. [JURORS start to take off their suit coats and hang them over backs of chairs.]

FOREMAN. Well, figure this is our duty.

TWELVE. I didn't object to doing my duty. I just mentioned that I might not have a job by the time I get back. [He and NINE move to table and take their places. NINE sits near right end of table.]

THREE [motioning to FOUR]. Ask him to hire you. He's rich. Look at the suit!

FOREMAN [to FOUR, as he tears off slips of paper for a ballot]. Is it custom-tailored?

FOUR. Yes, it is.

FOREMAN. I have an uncle who's a tailor. [FOUR takes his jacket off, places it carefully over back of chair and sits.]

FOUR. How does he do?

FOREMAN [*shaking his head*]. Not too well. Y'know, a friend of his, that's a friend of my uncle, the tailor—well—this friend wanted to be on this jury in my place.

SEVEN. Why didn't you let him? I would have done anything to miss this.

FOREMAN. And get caught, or something? Y'know what kind of a fine you could pay for anything like that? Anyway, this friend of my uncle's was on a jury once, about ten years ago—a case just about like this one.

TWELVE. So what happened?

FOREMAN. They let him off. Reasonable doubt. And do y'know, about eight years later they found out that he'd actually done it, anyway. A guilty man—a murderer—was turned loose in the streets.

THREE. Did they get him?

FOUR. They couldn't.

THREE. Why not?

FOUR. A man can't be held in double jeopardy. Unless it's a hung jury, they can't try a man twice for the same crime.

SEVEN. That isn't going to happen here.

THREE. Six days. They should have finished it in two. [*Slapping back of one hand into palm of other.*] Talk! Talk! Talk! [*Gets up and starts for water cooler.*] Did you ever hear so much talk about nothing?

TWO [*laughing nervously*]. Well—I guess—they're entitled . . .

THREE. Everybody gets a fair trial. . . . [*Shakes his head.*]

That's the system. [*Downs his drink.*] Well, I suppose you can't say anything against it. [*Tosses his water cup toward wastebasket and misses. TWO picks cup up and puts it in wastebasket as THREE returns to his seat.*]

SEVEN [*to TEN*]. How did you like that business about the knife? Did you ever hear a phonier story?

TEN [*wisely*]. Well, look, you've gotta expect that. You know what you're dealing with. . . .

SEVEN. He bought a switch knife that night. . . .

TEN [*with a sneer*]. And then he lost it.

SEVEN. A hole in his pocket.

TEN. A hole in his father.

TWO. An awful way to kill your father—a knife in his chest. [*Crosses to table.*]

TEN. Look at the kind of people they are—you know them. [*Gets handkerchief out again.*]

SEVEN. What's the matter? You got a cold?

TEN [*blowing*]. A lulu! These hot weather colds can kill you.

SEVEN. I had one last year, while I was on vacation, too.

FOREMAN [*briskly*]. All right, gentlemen. Let's take seats.

SEVEN. Right. This better be fast. I've got tickets to—[*Insert name of any current Broadway hit.*—for tonight. I must be the only guy in the world who hasn't seen it yet. [*Laughs and sits down, as do others still not seated.*] Okay, your honor, start the show.

FOREMAN [*to EIGHT, who is still looking out window*]. How about sitting down? [*EIGHT doesn't hear him.*] The gentleman at the window. [*EIGHT turns, startled.*] How about sitting down?

EIGHT. Oh, I'm sorry. [*Sits at right end of table, opposite FOREMAN.*]

TEN. It's tough to figure, isn't it? A kid kills his father. Bing! Just like that. Well, it's the element. They let the kids run wild. Maybe it serves 'em right.

FOUR. There are better proofs than some emotion you may have—perhaps a dislike for some group.

SEVEN. We all agreed that it was hot.

NINE. And that our tempers will get short.

THREE. That's if we disagree—but this is open and shut. Let's get it done.

FOREMAN. All right. Now—you gentlemen can handle this any way you want to. I mean, I'm not going to make any rules. If we want to discuss it first and then vote, that's one way. Or we can vote right now and see how we stand.

SEVEN. Let's vote now. Who knows, maybe we can all go home.

TEN. Yeah. Let's see who's where.

THREE. Right. Let's vote now.

EIGHT. All right. Let us vote.

FOREMAN. Anybody doesn't want to vote? [*Looks around table. There is a pause as ALL look at each other.*]

SEVEN. That was easy.

FOREMAN. Okay. All those voting guilty raise your hands.

[*JURORS THREE, SEVEN, TEN and TWELVE put their hands up instantly. The FOREMAN and TWO, FOUR, FIVE and SIX follow a second later. Then ELEVEN raises his hand and a moment later NINE puts his hand up.*] Eight—nine—ten—eleven—that's eleven for guilty. Okay. Not guilty? [*EIGHT's hand goes up. ALL turn to look at him.*]

THREE. Hey, you're in left field!

FOREMAN. Okay. Eleven to one. Eleven guilty, one not guilty.

Now we know where we stand.

THREE [*rising, to EIGHT*]. Do you really believe he's not guilty?

EIGHT [*quietly*]. I don't know.

SEVEN [*to FOREMAN*]. After six days, he doesn't know.

TWELVE. In six days I could learn calculus. This is A, B, C.

EIGHT. I don't believe that it is as simple as A, B, C.

THREE. I never saw a guiltier man in my life. [*Sits again.*]

EIGHT. What does a guilty man look like? He is not guilty until we say he is guilty. Are we to vote on his face?

THREE. You sat right in court and heard the same things I did.

The man's a dangerous killer. You could see it.

EIGHT. Where do you look to see if a man is a killer?

THREE [*irritated by him*]. Oh, well! . . .

EIGHT [*with quiet insistence*]. I would like to know. Tell me what the facial characteristics of a killer are. Maybe you know something I don't know.

FOUR. Look! What is there about the case that makes you think the boy is innocent?

EIGHT. He's nineteen years old.

THREE. That's old enough. He knifed his own father. Four

inches into the chest. An innocent little nineteen-year-old kid.

FOUR [*to THREE*]. I agree with you that the boy is guilty but I think we should try to avoid emotionally colored arguments.

THREE. All right. They proved it a dozen different ways. Do you want me to list them?

EIGHT. No.

TEN [*rising, putting his feet on seat of chair and sitting on back of it, then, to EIGHT*]. Well, do you believe that stupid story he told?

FOUR [*to TEN*]. Now, now.

TEN. Do you believe the kid's story?

EIGHT. I don't know whether I believe it or not. Maybe I don't.

SEVEN. So what'd you vote not guilty for?

EIGHT. There were eleven votes for guilty—it's not so easy for me to raise my hand and send a boy off to die without talking about it first.

SEVEN. Who says it's easy for me?

FOUR. Or me?

EIGHT. No one.

FOREMAN. He's still just as guilty, whether it's an easy vote or a hard vote.

SEVEN [*belligerently*]. Is there something wrong because I voted fast?

EIGHT. Not necessarily.

SEVEN. I think the guy's guilty. You couldn't change my mind if you talked for a hundred years.

EIGHT. I don't want to change your mind.

THREE. Just what are you thinking of?

EIGHT. I want to talk for a while. Look—this boy's been kicked around all his life. You know—living in a slum—his mother dead since he was nine. That's not a very good head start. He's a tough, angry kid. You know why slum kids get that way? Because we knock 'em over the head once a day, every day. I think maybe we owe him a few words. That's



all. [*Looks around table. He is met by cold looks. NINE nods slowly while FOUR begins to comb his hair.*]

FOUR. All right, it's hard, sure—it was hard for me. Everything I've got I fought for. I worked my way through college. That was a long time ago, and perhaps you do forget. I fought, yes, but I never killed.

THREE. I know what it's like. I never killed nobody.

TWELVE. I've been kicked around, too. Wait until you've worked in an ad agency and the big boy that buys the advertising walks in. We all know.

ELEVEN [*who speaks with an accent*]. In my country, in Europe, kicking was a science, but let's try to find something better than that.

TEN [*to EIGHT*]. I don't mind telling you this, mister. We don't owe the kid a thing. He got a fair trial, didn't he? You know what that trial cost? He's lucky he got it. Look, we're all grown-ups here. You're not going to tell us that we're supposed to believe him, knowing what he is. I've lived among 'em all my life. You can't believe a word they say. You know that.

NINE [*to TEN, very slowly*]. I don't know that. What a terrible thing for a man to believe! Since when is dishonesty a group characteristic? You have no monopoly on the truth!

THREE [*interrupting*]. All right. It's not Sunday. We don't need a sermon.

NINE [*not heeding*]. What this man says is very dangerous. [*EIGHT puts his hand on NINE's arm and stops him. NINE draws a deep breath and relaxes.*]

FOUR. I don't see any need for arguing like this. I think we ought to be able to behave like gentlemen.

SEVEN. Right!

TWELVE [*smiling up at FOUR*]. Oh, all right, if you insist.

FOUR [*to TWELVE*]. Thank you.

TWELVE. Sure.

FOUR. If we're going to discuss this case, why, let's discuss the facts.

FOREMAN. I think that's a good point. We have a job to do. Let's do it.

ELEVEN. If you gentlemen don't mind, I'm going to close the window. [*Gets up and does so, then, apologetically as he moves back to table.*] It was blowing on my neck. [*TEN blows his nose fiercely as he gets down from back of chair and sits again.*]

SEVEN. If you don't mind, I'd like to have the window open.

ELEVEN. But it was blowing on me.

SEVEN. Don't you want a little air? It's summer—it's hot.

ELEVEN. I was very uncomfortable.

SEVEN. There are twelve of us in this room; it's the only window. If you don't mind!

ELEVEN. I have some rights, too.

SEVEN. So do the rest of us.

FOUR [*to ELEVEN*]. Couldn't you trade chairs with someone at the other end of the table?

ELEVEN. All right, I will open the window, if someone would trade. [*Goes to window and opens it. TWO gets up and goes to ELEVEN's chair, near right end of table.*]

TWO [*motioning*]. Take my chair.

ELEVEN. Thank you. [*Goes to TWO's chair, near left end of table.*]

FOREMAN. Shall we get back to the case?

THREE. Yeah, let's.

TWELVE. I may have an idea here. I'm just thinking out loud now, but it seems to me that it's up to us to convince this gentleman—[*Motioning toward EIGHT.*]*—that we're right and he's wrong. Maybe if we each talk for a minute or two. You know—try it on for size.*

FOREMAN. That sounds fair enough.

FOUR. Very fair.

FOREMAN. Supposing we go once around the table.

SEVEN. Okay—let's start it off.

FOREMAN. Right. [*To TWO.*] We'll start with you.

TWO [*timidly*]. Oh. Well . . . [*There is a long pause.*] I just think he's guilty. I thought it was obvious.

EIGHT. In what way was it obvious?

TWO. I mean that nobody proved otherwise.

EIGHT [*quietly*]. Nobody has to prove otherwise; innocent until proven guilty. The burden of proof is on the prosecution. The defendant doesn't have to open his mouth. That's in the Constitution. The Fifth Amendment. You've heard of it.

FOUR. Everyone has.

TWO [*flustered*]. Well, sure—I've heard of it. I know what it is . . . I . . . what I meant . . . well, anyway . . . I think he's guilty!

EIGHT [*looking at TWO, shaking his head slowly*]. No reasons—just guilty. There is a life at stake here.

THREE. Okay, let's get to the facts. Number one: let's take the old man who lived on the second floor right underneath the room where the murder took place. At ten minutes after twelve on the night of the killing he heard loud noises in the upstairs apartment. He said it sounded like a fight. Then he heard the kid say to his father, "I'm gonna kill you." A second later he heard a body falling, and he ran to the door of his apartment, looked out and saw the kid running downstairs and out of the house. Then he called the police. They found the father with a knife in his chest.

FOREMAN. And the coroner fixed the time of death at around midnight.

THREE. Right. Now what else do you want?

EIGHT. It doesn't seem to fit.

FOUR. The boy's entire story is flimsy. He claimed he was at the movies. That's a little ridiculous, isn't it? He couldn't even remember what picture he saw.

THREE. That's right. Did you hear that? [*To FOUR.*] You're absolutely right.

FIVE. He didn't have any ticket stub.

EIGHT. Who keeps a ticket stub at the movies?

FOUR [*to FIVE*]. That's true enough.

FIVE. I suppose, but the cashier didn't remember him.

THREE. And the ticket taker didn't, either.

TEN. Look—what about the woman across the street? If her testimony don't prove it, then nothing does.

TWELVE. That's right. She saw the killing, didn't she?

FOREMAN [*rapping on table*]. Let's go in order.

TEN [*loudly*]. Just a minute. Here's a woman who's lying in bed and can't sleep. It's hot, you know. [*Gets up and begins to walk around at L stage, blowing his nose and talking.*] Anyway, she wakes up and she looks out the window, and right across the street she sees the kid stick the knife into his father.

EIGHT. How can she really be sure it was the kid when she saw it through the windows of a passing elevated train?

TEN [*pausing D L*]. She's known the kid all his life. His window is right opposite hers—across the el tracks—and she swore she saw him do it.

EIGHT. I heard her swear to it.

TEN. Okay. And they proved in court that you can look through the windows of a passing el train at night, and see what's happening on the other side. They proved it.

EIGHT. Weren't you telling us just a minute or two ago that you can't trust *them*? That you can't believe *them*.

TEN [*coldly*]. So?

EIGHT. Then I'd like to ask you something. How come you believed her? She's one of *them*, too, isn't she? [*TEN crosses up to EIGHT.*]

TEN. You're a pretty smart fellow, aren't you?

FOREMAN [*rising*]. Now take it easy. [*THREE gets up and goes to TEN.*]

THREE. Come on. Sit down. [*Leads TEN back to his seat.*] What're you letting him get you all upset for? Relax. [*TEN and THREE sit down.*]

FOUR. Gentlemen, they did take us out to the woman's room and we looked through the windows of a passing el train—  
[*To EIGHT.*]—didn't we?

EIGHT. Yes. [*Nods.*] We did.

FOUR. And weren't you able to see what happened on the other side?

EIGHT. I didn't see as well as they told me I would see, but I did see what happened on the other side.

TEN [*snapping at EIGHT*]. You see—do you see?

FOREMAN [*sitting again*]. Let's calm down now. [*To FIVE.*]  
It's your turn.

FIVE. I'll pass it.

FOREMAN. That's your privilege. [*To SIX.*] How about you?

SIX [*slowly*]. I don't know. I started to be convinced, you know, with the testimony from those people across the hall. Didn't they say something about an argument between the father and the boy around seven o'clock that night? I mean, I can be wrong.

ELEVEN. I think it was eight o'clock. Not seven.

EIGHT. That's right. Eight o'clock.

FOUR. They heard the father hit the boy twice and then saw the boy walk angrily out of the house.

SIX. Right.

EIGHT. What does that prove?

SIX. Well, it doesn't exactly prove anything. It's just part of the picture. I didn't say it proved anything.

FOREMAN. Anything else?

SIX. No. [*Rises, goes to water cooler for a drink and then sits again.*]

SEVEN. I don't know—most of it's been said already. We can talk all day about this thing, but I think we're wasting our time.

EIGHT. I don't.

FOUR. Neither do I. Go on.

SEVEN. Look at the kid's record. He stole a car. He's been arrested for mugging. I think they said he stabbed somebody in the arm.

FOUR. They did.

SEVEN. He was picked up for knife fighting. At fifteen he was in reform school.

THREE. And they sent him to reform school for stabbing someone!

SEVEN [*with sarcasm*]. This is a very fine boy.

EIGHT. Ever since he was five years old his father beat him up regularly. He used his fists.

SEVEN. So would I! On a kid like that.

THREE. You're right. It's the kids. The way they are—you know? They don't listen. [*Bitterly.*] I've got a kid. When he was eight years old he ran away from a fight. I saw him. I was *so* ashamed. I told him right out, "I'm gonna make a man out of you or I'm gonna bust you up into little pieces trying." When he was fifteen he hit me in the face. He's big, you know? I haven't seen him in three years. Rotten kid! I hate tough kids! You work your heart out. . . . [*Pauses.*] All right. Let's get on with it. . . . [*Gets up and goes to window, very embarrassed.*]

FOUR. We're missing the point here. This boy—let's say he's a product of a filthy neighborhood and a broken home. We can't help that. We're not here to go into the reasons why slums are breeding grounds for criminals; they are. I know it. So do you. The children who come out of slum backgrounds are potential menaces to society.

TEN. You said it there. I don't want any part of them, believe me. [*There is a dead silence for a moment, and then FIVE speaks haltingly.*]

FIVE. I've lived in a slum all my life. . . .

TEN. Now wait a second!

FIVE. I used to play in a backyard that was filled with garbage. Maybe it still smells on me.

FOREMAN. Now, let's be reasonable. There's nothing personal—

FIVE [*rising, slamming his hand down on table*]. There is something personal! [*Then he catches himself, and, seeing EVERYONE looking at him, sits down, fists clenched.*]

THREE [*turning from window*]. Come on, now. He didn't mean you, feller. Let's not be so sensitive. [*There is a long pause.*]

EIGHT [*breaking silence*]. Who did he mean?

ELEVEN. I can understand this sensitivity.

FOREMAN. Now let's stop the bickering.

TWELVE. We're wasting time.

FOREMAN [*to EIGHT*]. It's your turn.

EIGHT. All right. I had a peculiar feeling about this trial. Somehow I felt that the defense counsel never really conducted a thorough cross-examination. Too many questions were left unasked.

FOUR. While it doesn't change my opinion about the guilt of the kid, still, I agree with you that the defense counsel was bad.

THREE. So-o-o-o? [*Crosses back to table and sits.*]

EIGHT. This is a point.

THREE. What about facts?

EIGHT. So many questions were never answered.

THREE [*annoyed*]. What about the questions that were answered? For instance, let's talk about that cute little switch knife. You know, the one that fine upright kid admitted buying.

EIGHT. All right, let's talk about it. Let's get it in here and look at it. I'd like to see it again, Mr. Foreman. [*FOREMAN looks at him questioningly and then gets up and goes to door L.*]

[*During the following dialogue the FOREMAN knocks. The GUARD unlocks the door and comes in L and the FOREMAN whispers to him. The GUARD nods and leaves, locking the door. The FOREMAN returns to his seat.*]

THREE. We all know what it looks like. I don't see why we have to look at it again. [*To FOUR.*] What do you think?

FOUR. The gentleman has a right to see exhibits in evidence.

THREE [*shrugging*]. Okay with me.

FOUR [*to EIGHT*]. This knife is a pretty strong piece of evidence, don't you agree?

EIGHT. I do.

FOUR. Now let's get the sequence of events right as they relate to the switch knife.

TWELVE. The boy admits going out of his house at eight o'clock, after being slapped by his father.

EIGHT. Or punched.

FOUR. Or punched. [*Gets up and begins to pace at R stage, moving D R to U R and back again.*] He went to a neighborhood store and bought a switch knife. The storekeeper was arrested the following day when he admitted selling it to the boy.

THREE. I think everyone agrees that it's an unusual knife. Pretty hard to forget something like that.

FOUR. The storekeeper identified the knife and said it was the only one of its kind he had in stock. Why did the boy get it?

SEVEN [*sarcastically*]. As a present for a friend of his, he says.

FOUR [*pausing in his pacing*]. Am I right so far?

EIGHT. Right.

THREE. You bet he's right. [*To ALL.*] Now listen to this man. He knows what he's talking about.

FOUR [*standing at R stage*]. Next, the boy claims that on the way home the knife must have fallen through a hole in his coat pocket, that he never saw it again. Now there's a story, gentlemen. You know what actually happened. The boy took the knife home, and a few hours later stabbed his father with it and even remembered to wipe off the fingerprints.

[*The door L opens and the GUARD walks in with an oddly-designed knife with a tag on it. FOUR crosses L and takes the knife from him. The GUARD goes out L, closing and locking the door.*]

FOUR [*at L C, holding up knife*]. Everyone connected with the case identified this knife. Now are you trying to tell me that someone picked it up off the street and went up to the boy's house and stabbed his father with it just to be amusing?

EIGHT. No. I'm saying that it's possible that the boy lost the knife, and that someone else stabbed his father with a similar knife. It's possible. [*FOUR flips knife open and jams it into wall just downstage of door L.*]

FOUR [*standing back to allow others to see*]. Take a look at

that knife. It's a very strange knife. I've never seen one like it before in my life. Neither had the storekeeper who sold it to him. [EIGHT reaches casually into his pocket and withdraws an object. No one notices him. He stands up.] Aren't you trying to make us accept a pretty incredible coincidence? EIGHT [moving toward FOUR]. I'm not trying to make anyone accept it. I'm just saying it's possible.

THREE [rising, shouting]. And I'm saying it's not possible! [EIGHT swiftly flicks open blade of a switch knife, jams it into wall next to first knife and steps back. They are exactly alike. There are several gasps and EVERYONE stares at knife. There is a long silence. THREE continues, slowly, amazed.]

What are you trying to do?

TEN [loudly]. Yeah, what is this? Who do you think you are? [A flow of ad lib conversation bursts forth.]

FIVE. Look at it! It's the same knife!

FOREMAN. Quiet! Let's be quiet. [JURORS quiet down. THREE sits again.]

FOUR. Where did you get it?

EIGHT. I got it in a little junk shop around the corner from the boy's house. It cost two dollars.

THREE. Now listen to me!

EIGHT [turning to him]. I'm listening.

THREE. You pulled a real smart trick here, but you proved absolutely zero. Maybe there are ten knives like that, so what?

EIGHT. Maybe there are.

THREE. The boy lied and you know it.

EIGHT [crossing back to his seat, sitting]. And maybe he didn't lie. Maybe he did lose the knife and maybe he did go to the movies. Maybe the reason the cashier didn't see him was because he sneaked into the movies, and maybe he was ashamed to say so. [Looks around.] Is there anybody here who didn't sneak into the movies once or twice when they were young? [There is a long silence.]

ELEVEN. I didn't.

FOUR. Really, not even once?

ELEVEN. We didn't have movies.

FOUR. Oh. [Crosses back to his place and sits.]

EIGHT. Maybe he did go to the movies—maybe he didn't. And—he may have lied. [To TEN.] Do you think he lied?

TEN [violently]. Now that's a stupid question. Sure, he lied!

EIGHT [to FOUR]. Do you?

FOUR. You don't have to ask me that. You know my answer. He lied.

EIGHT [to FIVE]. Do you think he lied? [FIVE can't answer immediately. He looks around nervously.]

FIVE. I—I don't know.

SEVEN. Now wait a second. What are you—the guy's lawyer?

Listen—there are still eleven of us who think he's guilty.

You're alone. What do you think you're going to accomplish? If you want to be stubborn and hang this jury he'll be tried again, and found guilty sure as he's born.

EIGHT. You're probably right.

SEVEN. So what are you going to do about it? We can be here all night.

NINE. It's only one night. A man may die.

SEVEN. Oh, now. Come on.

EIGHT [to NINE]. Well, yes, that's true.

FOREMAN. I think we ought to get on with it now.

THREE. Right. Let's get going here.

TEN [to THREE]. How do you like this guy? [THREE shrugs and turns to EIGHT.]

THREE. Well, what do you say? You're the one holding up the show.

FOUR [to EIGHT]. Obviously you don't think the boy is guilty.

EIGHT. I have a doubt in my mind.

FOUR. But you haven't really presented anything to us that makes it possible for us to understand your doubt. There's the old man downstairs. He heard it. He heard the kid shriek it out. . . .

THREE. The woman across the el tracks—she saw it!

SEVEN. We know he bought a switch knife that night and we don't know where he really was. At the movies?

FOREMAN. Earlier that night the kid and his father did have a fight.

FOUR. He's been a violent kid all the way, and while that doesn't prove anything . . .

TEN. Still, you know . . .

EIGHT [*standing*]. I've got a proposition to make. [*FIVE stands and puts his hands on back of his chair. Several jurors glare at him. He sinks his head down a bit, then sits down.*]

I want to call for a vote. I want you eleven men to vote by secret ballot. I'll abstain. If there are still eleven votes for guilty, I won't stand alone. We'll take in a guilty verdict right now.

SEVEN. Okay. Let's do it.

FOREMAN. That sounds fair. Is everyone agreed?

FOUR. I certainly am.

TWELVE. Let's roll it.

ELEVEN [*slowly*]. Perhaps this is best. [*EIGHT walks over to window and stands there for a moment looking out; then turns as FOREMAN passes ballot slips down table to all of them. EIGHT tenses as JURORS begin to write. Then folded ballots are passed back to FOREMAN. He flips through folded ballots, counts them to be sure he has eleven and then he begins to open them, reading verdict each time.*]

FOREMAN. Guilty. Guilty. Guilty. Guilty. Guilty. Guilty.

THREE. That's six.

FOREMAN. Please. [*Fumbles with one ballot.*] Six guilty. Guilty. Guilty. Guilty. [*Pauses for a moment at tenth ballot and then reads.*] Not guilty. [*THREE slams his hand down hard on table. EIGHT starts for table, as FOREMAN reads final ballot.*] Guilty.

TEN [*angrily*]. How do you like that!

SEVEN [*standing, snarling*]. Who was it? I think we have a right to know. [*Looks about. No one moves.*]

CURTAIN

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## ACT TWO

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AT RISE OF CURTAIN: *It is only a second or two later. The JURORS are in the same positions as they were at the end of Act One.*]

THREE [*after brief pause*]. All right! Who did it? What idiot changed his vote?

EIGHT. Is that the way to talk about a man's life? [*Sits at his place again.*]

THREE. Whose life are you talking about? The life of the dead man or the life of a murderer?

SEVEN. I want to know. Who?

THREE. So do I.

ELEVEN. Excuse me. This was a secret ballot.

THREE. No one looked while we did it, but now I want to know.

ELEVEN. A secret ballot; we agreed on that point, no? If the gentleman wants it to remain a secret—

THREE [*standing up angrily*]. What do you mean? There are no secrets in here! I know who it was. [*Turns to FIVE.*]

What's the matter with you? You come in here and you vote guilty and then this—[*Nods toward EIGHT.*]—slick preacher starts to tear your heart out with stories about a poor little kid who just couldn't help becoming a murderer. So you change your vote. If that isn't the most sickening—[*FIVE edges away in his chair.*]

FOREMAN. Now hold it. [*SEVEN sits again slowly.*]

FOUR [*to THREE*]. I agree with you that the man is guilty, but let's be fair.

THREE. Hold it? Be fair? That's just what I'm saying. We're trying to put a guilty man into the chair where he belongs—and all of a sudden we're paying attention to fairy tales.