Callback - Scene 1

to jail—or death, sometimes—then years later things turn up.

FOUR. And then on the other hand some killers get turned loose and they go and do it again. They squeeze out on some technicality and kill again. [*Throws his cup into waste-basket, walks back and sits. We then hear* THREE *say to* FIVE.]

THREE. Look, buddy, now that we've kind of cooled off, why —ah—I was a little excited a minute ago. Well, you know how it is—I didn't mean to get nasty. Nothing personal. [TWO *trails back to his place and sits again.*]

START

FIVE [*after staring at* THREE *for a moment*]. Okay.

SEVEN [*to* EIGHT]. Look. Supposing you answer me this. If the kid didn't kill him, who did?

EIGHT. As far as I know, we're supposed to decide whether or not the boy on trial is guilty. We're not concerned with anyone else's motives here.

SEVEN. I suppose, but who else had a motive?

EIGHT. The kid's father was along in years; maybe an old grudge.

NINE. Remember, it is "guilty beyond a reasonable doubt." This is an important thing to remember.

THREE [*to* TEN]. Everyone's a lawyer. [*To* NINE.] Supposing you explain to us what your reasonable doubts are.

NINE. This is not easy. So far, it's only a feeling I have. A feeling. Perhaps you don't understand.

THREE [*abruptly*]. No. I don't.

TEN. A feeling! What are we gonna do, spend the night talking about your feelings? What about the facts?

THREE. You said a mouthful. [*To* NINE.] Look, the old man heard the kid yell, "I'm gonna kill you." A second later he heard the father's body falling, and he saw the boy running out of the house fifteen seconds after that.

SEVEN. Where's the reasonable doubt in that?

TWELVE. That's right. And let's not forget the woman across the street. She looked into the open window and saw the boy stab his father. She saw it!

THREE. Now, if that's not enough for you——

EIGHT [*quietly firm*]. It's not enough for me.

FOUR. What is enough for you? I'd like to know.

SEVEN. How do you like him? It's like talking into a dead 'phone.

FOUR. The woman saw the killing through the windows of a moving elevated train. The train had five cars and she saw it through the windows of the last two cars. She remembers the most insignificant details.

THREE. Well, what have you got to say about that?

EIGHT. I don't know. It doesn't sound right to me.

THREE. Well, supposing you think about it. [*To* TWELVE.] Lend me your pencil. [TWELVE *hands him a pencil.*] Let's play some tic-tac-toe. [*Draws an X on a piece of paper, then hands pencil and paper to* TWELVE.] We might as well pass the time.

EIGHT. This isn't a game. [*Rises and snatches paper away.* THREE *jumps up.*]

THREE. Now, wait a minute!

EIGHT. This is a man's life.

THREE [*angrily*]. Who do you think you are?

SEVEN [*rising*]. All right, let's take it easy. [EIGHT *sits again.*]

THREE. I've got a good mind to walk around this table and belt him one!

FOREMAN. Now, please. I don't want any fights in here.

THREE. Did you see him? The nerve! The absolute nerve!

TEN. All right. Forget it. It don't mean anything.

SIX. How about sitting down?

THREE. "This isn't a game." Who does he think he is? [SIX *and* TEN *urge* THREE *back into his seat.* SEVEN *sits again, and* ALL *are seated once more.*]

FOUR [*when quiet is restored*]. Weren't we talking about elevated trains?

EIGHT. Yes, we were.

FOUR. So?

EIGHT. All right. How long does it take an elevated train going at top speed to pass a given point?

END

Callback - Scene 2

TEN [*exploding*]. Bright! He's a common ignorant slob. He don't even speak good English!

ELEVEN [*slowly*]. He *doesn't* even speak good English.

FOUR. The boy is clever enough. [FOUR's *line is spoken as* TEN *rises and glowers at* ELEVEN. *There is a momentary pause.* TEN *sits again as* FIVE *gets up and looks around. He is nervous.*]

START

FIVE. I'd like to change my vote to not guilty. [THREE *slams his fist into his hand, then walks to window and does it again.*]

FOREMAN. Are you sure?

FIVE. Yes. I'm sure.

FOREMAN. The vote is nine to three in favor of guilty.

FOUR [*to* FIVE]. I'd like to know why you've changed your vote.

FIVE. I think there's a doubt.

THREE [*turning abruptly from window, snarling*]. Where? What is the doubt?

FIVE. There's the knife. . . .

SEVEN [*slamming his hand down on table*]. Oh, fine!

TEN. He—[*Motioning at* EIGHT.]—he talked you into believing a fairy tale.

FOUR [*to* FIVE]. Go on. Give us the reasons.

FIVE. The old man, too. Maybe he didn't lie, but then just *maybe* he did. Maybe the old man doesn't like the kid.

SEVEN. Well, if that isn't the end.

FIVE. I believe that there is reasonable doubt. [*Sits again.*]

SEVEN. What are you basing it on? Stories that this guy—[*Indicates* EIGHT.]—made up! He ought to write for Amazing Detective Monthly. He'd make a fortune. Listen, the kid had a lawyer, didn't he? Why didn't his lawyer bring up all these points?

FIVE. Lawyers can't think of everything.

SEVEN. Oh, brother! [*To* EIGHT.] You sit in here and pull stories out of thin air. Now we're supposed to believe that the old man didn't get out of bed, run to the door and see the kid beat it downstairs fifteen seconds after the killing.

FOUR. That's the testimony, I believe.

SEVEN. And the old man swore to this—yes—he swore to this only so he could be important. [*Looks over at* NINE.]

FIVE. Did the old man say he *ran* to the door?

SEVEN. Ran. Walked. What's the difference? He got there.

FIVE. I don't remember what he said. But I don't see how he could run.

FOUR. He said he *went*. I remember it now. He *went* from his bedroom to the front door. That's enough, isn't it?

EIGHT. Where was his bedroom, again?

TEN [*disinterested*]. Down the hall somewhere.

EIGHT [*mad*]. Down the hall! Are we to send a man off to die because it's down the hall *somewhere?*

TEN. I thought you remembered everything. Don't you remember that?

EIGHT. No, I don't.

NINE. I don't remember, either.

EIGHT. Mr. Foreman, I'd like to take a look at the diagram of the apartment.

SEVEN. Why don't we have them run the trial over just so you can get everything straight?

EIGHT. The bedroom is down the hall somewhere. Do you *know*—do you know exactly where it is? Please. A man's life is at stake. Do you *know?*

SEVEN. Well, ah . . .

EIGHT. Mr. Foreman.

FOREMAN [*rising*]. I heard you. [*Goes to door* L *and knocks on door.*]

END

[*During the ensuing dialogue the* GUARD *opens the door* L. *The* FOREMAN *whispers to him. The* GUARD *nods and then closes the door.*]

THREE [*stepping away from window, moving a few steps toward* EIGHT]. All right. What's this one for? How come you're the only one in the room who wants to see exhibits all the time?

FIVE. I want to see this one, too.

it was the kid, he still had to run down the hall and down the stairs—at least one flight of stairs.

THREE. You see! You see! [SEVEN *rises from floor and dusts himself off.*]

FOUR. The old man downstairs may have been wrong on the time, but in view of this I think it's quite reasonable to assume that he did see the kid run downstairs.

TWELVE [*to* EIGHT]. So now both time sequences check—the one you did and the one we did; what with running downstairs and everything, it does pretty much check out on times.

SEVEN. Sure—he's an old man who wants attention. . . . [*Motions at* NINE.] He's probably right, but the old man feels the way everyone does—a life is at stake. [*Sits again at table, placing knife back on table.*]

FOUR. So the story of the old man may well be true.

EIGHT. Except for the fact that he absolutely swore, under oath, that it was only fifteen seconds.

NINE. We seem to all agree that it was twenty-five to forty seconds later.

EIGHT. You are now admitting that the old man lied in one case and told the truth in the other. I admit that this does tend to confirm the story of the old man, but in part he is now a proven liar—and this is by your own admission.

TWO [*to* EIGHT]. That may be true, that the old man lies in part, but I think it will change my vote once more. [*To* FOREMAN.] Guilty.

THREE [*to* SIX]. What about you? What do you think now?

SIX [*getting up, crossing to water cooler*]. I'm not just sure what I think. I want to talk some more. At first I thought guilty, then I changed. Now—I'm sort of swinging back to guilty. [*Takes a drink.*]

THREE [*to* ELEVEN]. And what about you?

ELEVEN. No. [*Shakes his head.*] I am now in real doubt—real doubt. . . .

FIVE. I say guilty. I was right the first time.

THREE. Now we're beginning to make sense in here.

FOREMAN. It seems to be about nine guilty to three not guilty. [FOUR *sits again.*]

EIGHT. One more question about the old man downstairs. How many of you live in apartment buildings? [*Eight hands go up, including his own.*]

ELEVEN [*to* EIGHT]. I don't know what you're thinking but I know what I'm thinking.

FOUR [*to* ELEVEN]. What's that?

ELEVEN. I do not live in a tenement, but it is close and there is just enough light in the hall so you can see the steps, no more—the light bulbs are so small—and this murder took place in a tenement. Remember how we stumbled on the steps?

EIGHT. The police officers were using big bulbs and one even had a flashlight. Remember?

ELEVEN. An old man who misjudged the time by twenty seconds, on this we all agree, this old man looked down the dark hallway of a tenement and recognized a running figure?

EIGHT. He was one hundred per cent wrong about the time; it took twice as long as he thought.

ELEVEN. Then could not the old man be one hundred per cent wrong about who he saw?

THREE. That's the most idiotic thing I've ever heard of. You're making that up out of thin air.

TWELVE. We're a hung jury. Let's be honest about it.

ELEVEN [*to* SEVEN]. Do you truly feel that there is no room for reasonable doubt?

SEVEN. Yes, I do.

ELEVEN. I beg your pardon, but maybe you don't understand the term, "reasonable doubt."

SEVEN [*angrily*]. What do you mean, I don't understand it? Who do you think you are to talk to me like that? [*To* ALL.] How do you like this guy? He comes over here running for his life, and before he can even take a big breath he's telling us how to run the show. The arrogance of him!

FOUR. No one here is asking where anyone came from.

SEVEN. I was born right here.