

Scene 15: October 23, Wayne County Jail. In darkness, we hear clang of a sliding jail door. Barred light. A grill across center of the table. Ossian and Henry Sweet on one side, Lawyers Clarence Darrow and Arthur Hays on the other.

Hays: We've seen the statements! You can't mean--

Ossian: That's just how it was. I told the truth.

Darrow: Dr. Sweet, do you want me to be frank with you?

Ossian: Of course.

Darrow: Very well. If I am frank with you, will you be frank with me?

Ossian *after a pause* What do you want to say to me?

Darrow: Just what Mr. Hays is saying. That "statement" you made the night you were arrested . . . I won't say it's lies; but it sounds like a man trying not to tell the truth. The Prosecutor is bound to introduce it--we'll try to keep it out but I doubt if it will work--and then he'll put you through it, statement by statement. And they contradict each other. In five minutes he'll have the jury convinced that you never told the truth in your life. And your reputation is your best defense. Let me put you on the stand. Admit that was a lie, and tell the jury exactly what happened.

Ossian and Henry look at each other, nobody speaks

Hays: Look, nobody likes to admit that they lied. But you were interrogated without counsel, without being advised of your rights, in a state of anxiety immediately after the attack on your house -- we can defend that! But we can't defend this "I don't know if I was upstairs or downstairs" business.
another pause

Darrow: Three times now we've tried to find out what happened, and we don't know any more than the prosecution, and the trial starts in seven days. That's no way to treat your own lawyers.

Ossian: You don't want to know what happened.

Hays: Yes, we do. We really do.

Henry: I'll tell you.

Ossian: Henry!

Hays: Dr. Sweet, he has already admitted to firing into the crowd. You can't protect him from that, so let us hear it all.

Henry: I'll tell you: I'm glad I did it. Everybody sayin' "What'll we do? What'll we do?" What we did is stop them from coming in and throwing us out, like they did all the others. That's something new. They could put us in the penitentiary and it would still be worth it. Now the white man has learned a lesson. Now he knows he cannot pick on the black man and get away with it!

Silence. The clang of the jail door and a guard comes forward. The prisoners rise and are escorted out as the lawyers rise.

Hays: Well . . . he's right.

Darrow: Yes. And we mustn't ever let him get on the stand.