

McKinney Repertory Theatre (MRT) - 12 Angry Jurors by Reginald Rose

Audition Monologues to be used at auditions along with select group scenes.

JUROR EIGHT

I just want to talk. I don't know what I believe. There were eleven votes for 'guilty.' It's not easy for me to raise my hand and send a boy off to die without talking about it first. I'm not trying to change your mind. It's just that we're talking about somebody's life here. I mean, we can't decide in five minutes. Suppose we're wrong? Look, this boy's been kicked around all his life. I think maybe we owe him a few words. That's all.

<and>

It's very hard to keep personal prejudice out of a thing like this. And no matter where you run into it, prejudice obscures the truth. Well, I don't know what the truth is. No one ever will, I suppose. Nine of us now seem to feel that the defendant is innocent, but we're just gambling on probabilities. We may be wrong. We may be trying to return a guilty man to the community. No one can really know. But we have a reasonable doubt, and this is a safeguard which has enormous value in our system. No jury can declare a man guilty unless it's sure. We nine can't understand how you three are still so sure. Maybe you can tell us.

JUROR THREE

You're right. It's the kids. The way they are—you know? They don't listen. (Bitter) 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! You work your heart out . . . (Pause) All right. Let's get on with it. (Looks away, embarrassed.)

JUROR NINE

It's just that I looked at him for a very long time. The seam of his jacket was split under the arm. Did you notice that? He was a very old man with a torn jacket, and he carried two canes. I think I know him better than anyone here. This is a quiet, frightened, insignificant man who has been nothing all his life, who has never had recognition—his name in the newspapers. Nobody knows him after seventy-five years. That's a very sad thing. A man like this needs to be recognized. To be questioned, and listened to, and quoted just once. This is very important.

JUROR TEN

I don't understand you people. How can you believe this kid is innocent? Look, you know how those people lie. I don't have to tell you. They don't know what truth is. And lemme tell you, they—(FIVE gets up from table, turns his back to it, and goes to window)—don't need any real big reason to kill someone either. You know, they get drunk, and bang, someone's lying in the gutter. Nobody's blaming them. That's how they are. You know what I mean? Violent! (NINE gets up and does the same. He is followed by ELEVEN.)

JUROR TEN

Human life don't mean as much to them as it does to us. Hey, where are you going? Look, these people are drinking and fighting all the time, and if somebody gets killed, so somebody gets killed. They don't care. Oh sure, there are some good things about them, too. Look, I'm the first to say that. (EIGHT gets up, and then TWO and SIX follow him to the window.)

TEN. I've known a few who were pretty decent, but that's the exception. Most of them, it's like they have no feelings. They can do anything. What's going on here?

(The FOREMAN gets up and goes to the windows, followed by SEVEN and TWELVE.)

TEN. I'm speaking my piece, and you—Listen to me! They're no good. There's not one of 'em who's any good. We better watch out. Take it from me. This kid on trial ... (THREE sits at table toying with the knife and FOUR gets up and starts for the window. All have their backs to

TEN.)TEN. Well, don't you know about them? Listen to me! What are you doing? I'm trying to tell you something....

JUROR SEVEN

This better be fast. I got tickets to a ball game tonight. Yankees Cleveland. We got this new kid pitching, Modjelewski or whatever his name is. He's a bull this kid. Shhooooom A real jug handle.

<and>

Say, are you a salesman? You know what the soft sell is? You're pretty good at it. I'll tell ya. I got a different technique. Jokes. Drinks. Knock 'em on their asses. I made twenty-seven thousand last year selling marmalade. That's not bad. Considering marmalade. What are ya getting out of it kicks? The boy is guilty, pal. So, let's go home before we get sore throats.