

Reasons of State
A Memorial to Sacco and Vanzetti

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Scene 1

May 4, 1920

Office of Prosecutor Frederick G. Katzmann in the Dedham courthouse

Prosecutor Katzmann

Stenographer

Katzmann (*dictating*): ...it appears, given the extraordinarily high number of small cars of the same model, unfortunately hardly promising—did you get “promising”?

Stenographer: “—unfortunately hardly promising—”

Katzmann: ...that one could manage to determine through even the most careful inspection exactly which automobile stood at the ready for the criminals on the 15th of April. Since the witnesses’ statements contradict one another as is usual when it comes to sudden and terrifying events—wait, Miss, we must word that differently. Cross out that last part.

Stenographer: Starting from “since the witnesses’ statements”?

Katzmann: Yes. Governor Fuller requires reports which enable him to organize his own investigations. We must determine how it’s possible for the eyewitnesses to know nothing precise at all. So first off, the big picture. (*dictating*) According to police reports the attack took place at 3:05 pm on Pearl St., opposite the four-story Rice and Hutchins shoe factory building, the windows of which are opaque and were closed without exception. Have you got that?

Stenographer: “...were closed without exception.”

Katzmann: Only once shots were fired were the windows thrown open. At the same moment as the shooting of the cashier Parmenter and the guard Berardelli took place, the car drove up; the perpetrators threw in the package containing the payroll money, jumped in and drove off with the occupants at top speed. The incident played itself out in seconds, so that it’s practically impossible to get anywhere with the witnesses’ statements. The Slater and Morill shoe factory, where the victims were employed, lies farther off from the scene of the crime; its workers, and those who were doing construction in the street nearby, noticed the attack, as did the passengers of the train which had just arrived from Brockton shortly before the shots were fired off. The gathering of so many individuals after the event, their excited story telling, questions, suspicions and reckonings, familiar to every criminologist, only confounds the taking of evidence, so that a clear description by these provincials of events and especially of the persons involved just couldn’t be achieved.—Couldn’t be achieved. (*Pauses*) Still, some 30 witnesses claim—how many was it? Do you have the exact number?

Stenographer (*leafing through the files*): 35, Mr. Katzmann.

Katzmann: —35 witnesses claim to have seen the murderers and to be able to describe them. It can be concluded from their statements at most that the man next to the driver was blond and frail, as recently a porter by the name of Michael Levangie has declared with certainty. Although this witness stated immediately after the shooting that he didn’t get a view of the bandits at all. A woman claimed that while they were stopped the driver’s companion took the time to do some repairs under the car. This is, however, hardly credible.—O.K. Start a new paragraph there, Miss.

Stenographer: Yes, sir.

Katzmann: Summing up, should the suspicion of the New Bredford police—that the robber-murderers could be identical with the notorious Morelli gang—not be confirmed, then I am forced to conclude that the current results of the investigation seem to support the fear that the crime of April 15th in South Braintree will remain just as unsolved as that of December 24, 1919 in Bridgewater and the similar crimes which for some time now disrupt our region. I request therefore a direct order from the Governor of Massachusetts, as to whether the (in my opinion worthless) investigations into the Buick should be continued or if not rather—

(A knock on the door.)

A Police Inspector (*entering*): I am to report to Prosecutor Katzmann: there is a small Buick in for repairs at the garage of a certain Simon Johnson in Brockton.

Katzmann: And? Do you have grounds to suspect that it could be the one we're looking for?

Inspector: No. But the car belongs to an Italian named Boda, who lives with another Italian, a certain Coacci—

Katzmann: Yes, and—is that a robber or a murderer?

Inspector: No,—but Coacci is one of those radicals—

Katzmann (*suddenly interested*): Aha!—we could be on to something!—Keep talking!

Inspector: We had orders to deport Coacci from the State of Massachusetts. Yesterday, I went to his place to see if he was making preparations for departure. He was in the middle of packing when I arrived. In the meantime, we learned that the car at Johnson's belongs to his lodger Boda, and I was instructed to confiscate his suitcases. They've already been searched.

Katzmann (*excited*): Was the loot in there?

Inspector: No, nothing suspicious at all, only books, clothes, household goods and the like.

Katzmann: Then the whole damn thing was a waste! (*After a moment's reflection*): Wait! It doesn't matter. One has to keep a close eye on these radicals. See to it that the owner of the garage immediately informs the police when the car is picked up, and in case it involves politically suspect foreigners—arrest them immediately. Understand?

Inspector: Very well, Prosecutor Katzmann. (*Exit.*)

Katzmann: We want to finish the report. Ask Judge Thayer over. He is in the building, right?

Stenographer: I saw him go into his office. (*Exit.*)

Katzmann (*alone, walking back and forth, leafing through bundles of files, whistling a popular tune*)

Enter Judge Webster Thayer.

Thayer: You sent for me, Prosecutor Katzmann? Have you learned something new in the South Braintree affair?

Katzmann: Possibly. Have a seat. You know that Attorney General Palmer still insists that the car must be tracked down,—given the thousands of Buicks driving through here, naturally a totally futile undertaking, to want to determine the specific car, when it's likely out West already or outside of the States.

Thayer: And what methods do you propose?

Katzmann: Just wait. I was just about to dictate a report for Governor Fuller in Boston, in order to make it clear to him that the search for the Pearl Street murderers is practically hopeless, but that given the proliferation of such crimes we can certainly count on further attacks in the near future, at which time we must move more quickly and be better prepared. Once we've got ourselves a couple of bandits, then we'll certainly thereby be able to pick up older trails, too.

Thayer: Absolutely right. And now?

Katzmann: I broke off in the middle of the report. Chance favors Mr. Palmer. We have the prospect of taking a car into custody which could be invaluable as a *corpus delicti*.

Thayer: The wanted Buick?

Katzmann (*laughs*): If it is not so already, perhaps we can make it to be.

Thayer: I still don't understand.

Katzmann: The car is in a repair shop in Brockton and belongs to an Italian who's supposed to be connected to radical elements.

Thayer: Aha!

Katzmann: I've ordered that the characters who come to pick the car up be closely scrutinized, and if it's anarchists or some such business—whoosh! off to the slammer.

Thayer: My word! Excellent! Do you have some kind of specific grounds on which you would be able to establish a connection between the robbers and the revolutionaries?

Katzmann: With luck we'll be able to find one. The police have already taken away the suitcases of a deported anarchist named Coacci, who rented his room to Boda, the owner of the car. True, nothing was found in them,—but one doesn't so easily abandon suspicion of such clean pals.

Thayer: Splendid, very splendid, Mr. Katzmann. This is exceptionally convenient. Palmer is rabid for these types, especially the Italians. They've locked up two characters in New York who are supposed to have organized demonstrations or strikes, an Andrea Salsedo and a certain Elia, and because they didn't want to open their traps to name their precious anarchist accomplices, they were given the third degree. Cracking fingers, *et cetera*. Something of this must have trickled through, and the anarchists here in Massachusetts are supposed to have taken an especially lively interest in their buddies. In short—yesterday, one of the rascals, Salsedo, tumbled out a window from the 14th floor of the state prison.

Katzmann: —made to tumble, or on his own?

Thayer: It boils down to the same thing. Dead as a doornail, anyway, and in the report it says that we should keep a watchful eye on the anarchists of the area, from whom the production of a great uproar of protest is expected. Do you have here the police list of suspected radicals?

Katzmann: Naturally (*flipping open a file*). Were particular names mentioned to you?

Thayer: Only one,—wait, I've noted it down. (*Searching in notebook.*) Right—Bartolomeo Vanzetti. The fellow was specially in New York and engaged a lawyer for Salsedo and Elia.

Katzmann: Vanzetti—here: Offers fish for sale from a cart in Plymouth. Dangerous anarchist, conscientious objector, very well-read, writes original contributions for Italian revolutionary newspapers and appears as a speaker at meetings. Was active in several strike campaigns as an organizer and propagandist together with his friend Nicola Sacco, shoe-cutter in Stoughton.

Thayer: A fragrant bunch. If one could implicate this lot in the murder it would be a damn hard blow to their movement.

Katzmann: I would be happy if through the destruction of these dangerous elements I could both be useful to the state as well as avenge my poor friend Parmenter.

Thayer: You were personally close to the murdered Parmenter?

Katzmann: He was a member of the same Mason lodge to which I belong. I tell you, if the criminals get our lodge brothers for jurors, then their rabbleroxing propaganda won't disturb the affairs of American citizens any longer.

Thayer: Do what's possible, Prosecutor. If you could make a credible connection between the anarchists and the murder-robbery on April 15th or other crimes with the help of the car of that honorable Boda, you would thus render an inestimable service to the authority of the state.

Katzmann: You can depend on me that we will know how to establish the truth.

Thayer: One must try, if necessary, to help it to its feet. There is a kind of truth that is more valuable than an objective reporting of the facts. It is the truth required for reasons of state.

Katzmann: On this higher truth the right of the State is founded.

Thayer: We must make it happen. The State above all else!

C u r t a i n.

Scene 2

May 5, 1920

In front of Johnson's Garage in Brockton.
Nicola Sacco and Rosa Sacco have just arrived.

Sacco: Vanzetti is not yet here. If he doesn't bring Boda along, I'll drive the car myself.

Rosa: Did Coacci get his bags back?

Sacco: I don't think so. What foolishness this eternal snooping after papers, when he has to leave America within the next few days anyway. Boda's car breaking down is very inconvenient. We're in a hurry to get rid of our literature.

Rosa: I'm so nervous. I would be happy if our passport was finally in order.

Sacco: The gentlemen are taking their time. I was in Boston three weeks ago on account of this. They sent me away because the format of our photo was too large. Nevertheless, as much as I now long to see our father again after mother's death—it is good that we are not yet under way. Now I am needed here.

Rosa: Just don't let anything happen to you, now! I get scared whenever you're away.

Sacco: That's because of your condition. Don't torture yourself, you must feed our Dante and the little one who's due to arrive, and I am needed by the cause.

Rosa: But you know me, Nicola: I don't keep you at home when you want to work for the movement.

Sacco (*kisses her*): You are, of course, my brave wife and wise comrade, Rosa. Admittedly, there are difficult days ahead. Salsedo's terrible end is a beginning.

Rosa: Poor man!

Sacco: It seems they immediately released and deported Elia. He'd know too much. What's that moving back on the road there? Is that a tree?

Rosa: No, that's a man. He's coming toward us. That would be Vanzetti.

Sacco: Truly! (*Waving*) Hello, over here!

Enter Bartolomeo Vanzetti.

Vanzetti: Good day, Sacco, good day, comrade Rosa.

Sacco: I took you for a tree.

Vanzetti: That's on account of my career. Hamlet once mistook a fish peddler for a statesman.

Rosa: Hamlet? Who is that?

Vanzetti: A Danish prince in a play by Shakespeare. I'll tell you his story later.

Sacco: You see, Bartolomeo knows his literature. He writes his own poetry, did you know?

Vanzetti: As well as a proletarian can.

Rosa: Oh, I've already read verses of yours, very beautiful ones.

Sacco: Is everything in order, Vanzetti?

Vanzetti: The papers are ready for us, all we have to do is pick them up.

Sacco: Have you written the flyer for the meeting?

Vanzetti: Here, everything exactly as we discussed with Colombo and d'Alessandro. The hall is definitely rented? (*Sacco puts the manuscript in his pocket.*)

Sacco: Naturally, the Clark Hall here in Brockton. Pardo Montagano was at my place just yesterday evening. He finalized everything. But you'll hold the main address?

Vanzetti: That would be best, since I was personally in New York. I have a lot of material. The two were hideously tortured.

Rosa: It is atrocious. Did they throw Salsedo out the window?

Vanzetti: Conclusive reports have not yet come out. It may be a suicide.

Sacco: Elia is supposedly already gone.

Vanzetti: He received orders yesterday morning to be aboard the ship before noon. I spoke with Attorney Moore. He told me that in the meantime Elia had gone to the New York attorney Nelles and given a statement that he and Salsedo had been terribly tortured to extract secrets. He was so weak and agitated that he could only speak with difficulty. He's now en route to Italy.

Rosa: For that I envy him, nonetheless.

Sacco: Go home now to Dante, Rosa. Tell him that I will still play with him today. I will follow you soon, right after we've got the papers secured.

Rosa: I will be happy once you're home. (*Exit.*)

Vanzetti: You are a lucky man, Sacco.

Sacco: I am glad to have this woman.

Vanzetti: And the child!

Sacco: The second is on the way. Yes, well, you know, your study of poetry and the sciences helps you keep your balance in the hard battle against the enemies of the proletariat, against the State and bourgeois society. For that I need my family, I need to be a domestic father in order to work beyond the present moment for the future.

Vanzetti: Neither of us can totally escape such personal ties. Aside from my old father, I have a sister, Luigia, of whom I'm very fond. But I don't believe that blood relationship makes much of a difference; it only helps in getting to know some people better than others, and if thereby we discover comrades among them, then of course we must love them dearly.

Sacco: Yes, without any spiritual bond in the Idea family is just ballast.— (*Pause.*)
Didn't Orciani plan on coming along, or Boda?

Vanzetti: Maybe one of the comrades will still show. Of course, it's unlikely that they would miss a workday. But we can keep waiting.

Sacco: It is hard to get by these days.

Vanzetti: Things have certainly not been made easier for you, especially.

Sacco: When I think with what expectations I emigrated from Torremaggiore. I could knock about then for years in every sort of job imaginable, until I learned the shoe-cutting trade. Ever since, things have gone reasonably well. I have my little house, my pretty garden.

Vanzetti: Hasn't your activity as an anarchist ever caused you any difficulty with your employers?

Sacco: Hardly. Only during the War, when you and I fled to Mexico from the draft—that was hard, leaving the wife and small child behind alone. But since then my usefulness as a worker has always broken the factory bosses' resistance to the revolutionary.—All said, a man like my current employer, Kelley, knows who he can trust even with the duty of factory night watchman for a long time now. I could have made at least \$20,000 in leather goods disappear with ease. Ah, Vanzetti, I wish that except for working for freedom I could dedicate myself entirely to gardening and our household.

Vanzetti: Do you know what I'd like to be most of all?—a teacher. I think I've got what it takes. Well, it's too late for that. For that I needed to have had the opportunity to lay a foundation in my youth. But to the proletarian son they said simply: Out into the world and earn your bread! Since I began pushing my cart through Plymouth selling eels, I've done just fine. For all that, the work's not as easy as you might think. You see, I have to travel to Boston frequently to buy fish. For that I need to carry \$80 to \$120 cash in my pocket. I must first collect that all together. And what street muggings and thefts we've had in recent times! That's why I always carry a revolver,—look here (*shows him*).

Sacco: Is it loaded?

Vanzetti: I bought it loaded but haven't yet fired off a shot. I don't own any other ammunition.—Oh, and I also have four empty shells here. I'm supposed to

bring them to a neighbor in Plymouth who uses them for hunting.—Do you have a weapon?

Sacco: As a matter of fact, I do too,—the revolver that I need to have as night watchman. I carry it inside my pants; and with it a bunch of cartridges. I've been wanting to fire them off in the woods to get rid of them before setting off for Italy—, but I keep forgetting to.

Vanzetti: I hope I never have to let my bullets from the barrel. But what is a person to do, if something happens to you like what recently happened to the folks from the shoe factory in South Braintree?

Sacco: \$25,000 has been offered for the capture of the murderers and there's not a trace of them.

Vanzetti: They're searching for a small car that's supposed to have played the lead roll in the story. It is alleged to be the same car with which the earlier murder in Bridgewater was attempted. Well, the two of us won't wish to earn the informant's reward.

Sacco: The robbers will have taken precautionary measures. They must certainly be bold fellows.

Vanzetti: They're poor devils, Sacco! They think only of their own need and their own advantage. Their actions are not regulated by a grand moral idea, and therefore the life of a fellow human being counts for them as much as the proletarian's life counts for the state. They don't feel their own lives connected with that of their class, and if they should be captured—what end awaits them? The electric chair!

Sacco: To be roasted alive—no thanks!

Vanzetti: Certainly in these parts you don't have to be a murderer to meet your end. Think of the gallows in Chicago! And how close did Tom Mooney come to being forced down the same path!

Sacco: You must not forget on the 9th in Clark Hall to demand the release of Tom Mooney and Warren Billings!

Vanzetti: Don't worry! Our poor friend Salsedo will only be the starting point for speaking on the fundamental break with class justice. I will skip over neither Tom Mooney and Warren Billings nor the Centralia scandal, and I will even remind them that while it has no concern at all for the slow deaths of tens of thousands of proletarians who are sent into the prisons by urban misery, yet because of two corpses murdered without its assistance it has the whole population of Massachusetts running after a missing car.

Sacco: Listen, Vanzetti, I think now it's about time we check up on our car. None of our comrades are likely to show up.

Vanzetti: Good, I'll ring the bell. (*Pushes the bell.*)

Mrs. Johnson opens the garage door.

Sacco: We would like to pick up the car that Mr. Boda left for repair.

Mrs. Johnson: Has Mr. Boda given his consent?

Sacco: Is Mr. Simon Johnson himself not here? He knows me.

Mrs. Johnson (*calls into the garage*): Simon, hurry out here!

Simon Johnson appears.

Johnson: Ah, Mr. Sacco! Pleased to see you. You want to pick up Mr. Boda's car? Certainly; the repairs are finished. Would you like to go round and drive the car out yourself? (*Bows to Vanzetti*) Johnson is my name, Simon Johnson.

Vanzetti: This is my friend Bartolomeo Vanzetti,—I can vouch for him.

Johnson: Oh, that's good enough for me. That's good enough for me, of course. (*Sacco and Vanzetti proceed into the garage.*)

Johnson (*to his wife*): Hurry, telephone the police that two Italian anarchists are here to pick up Boda's car.

(*Mrs. Johnson rushes off.*)

(*Sacco and Vanzetti come back out.*)

Sacco: But, Mr. Johnson, we definitely can't take the car like this. There's no number and name plate on it.

Johnson: Really? Right—right—I remember, that was overlooked. Yes, that's very embarrassing, now the gentlemen will have to take the trouble of a return visit tomorrow morning.

Vanzetti: You can't get the plates any earlier?

Johnson: Unfortunately, no, Mr. Vanzetti. Please don't take it badly.—Well, see you soon! Tomorrow you'll definitely get your car. See you soon. (*Exit, slamming the door closed.*)

Vanzetti: What a twit!

Sacco: We certainly can't drive off in the car without markings. The police would stop us at the first opportunity and we'd be busted with all our literature.

Vanzetti: It's dangerous enough as it is. The police have certainly gotten wind that we're planning a meeting for the 9th.

Sacco: All the more reason to avoid drawing extra attention to our car.

Vanzetti: By the way, in case we should have some kind of bad luck, of course we don't know any Boda or anyone else who we might be asked about.

Sacco: We needn't waste any words on that point.—Come on, let's ride together back to our place, the street car is right there. Rosa will be glad when I return so early.

(*Both exit.*)

(*The stage stays empty for a short while.*)

(*Police ride up with the inspector, they dismount from their motorcycles.*)

Inspector (*rings loudly*): Hey, Mr. Johnson!

Johnson (*opening the door*):—Here, inspector!

Inspector: Who was here?

Johnson: Two anarchists. One was Sacco, who I know personally, the other's called Vanzetti.

Inspector: And where are they now? I must arrest them.

Johnson: There they are now. Look, they are just getting onto the streetcar. Drive after them, drive after them! You'll catch up to them easily. Hope you make a good haul!

Inspector: Hop to it, on your bikes! After those two!

(*Policemen jump swiftly onto their motorcycles.*)

C u r t a i n.

Scene 3
May 16, 1920
Setting as in Scene 1
Katzmann, Thayer, Police Inspector, Stenographer

Katzmann: All in all, Judge Thayer, we made a good haul.

Thayer: Have witnesses for the prosecution been found?

Katzmann: Some are giving pretty good testimony. Admittedly, with the majority we won't have much luck. How many witnesses have the Police deposed?

Inspector: The depositions continue without pause. We have preliminary notes from 160 people. Most testify favorably for Sacco and Vanzetti. These ones are usually immediately dismissed by the police chief. I have brought along an excerpt from the statements.

Thayer: Give that here (*taking the paper*). The accused are present?

Inspector: Yes. Of the witnesses only the porter Levangie has been called in. He's waiting outside.

Thayer: Haven't you already mentioned this name recently?

Katzmann: This is the man who described one of the murderers as blond and frail.

Thayer: Does one of the arrested look like that then?

Katzmann: Not in the least. But the witness explained earlier that he hadn't seen any of the participants at all.

Thayer: And now he identifies the perpetrator? This man we can use.—What else have the police done to determine the truth?

Inspector: We supply the newspapers with daily warnings about the revolutionary movement and thereby prepare public opinion for the event that Sacco and Vanzetti are accused in the South Braintree affair.

Thayer: Good. The affair must be brought to the desired conclusion no matter what.

Katzmann: I am preparing to bring evidence against both of them also in connection with the hold-up in Bridgewater.

Thayer: And are you making any progress?

Katzmann: I certainly hope that we will be able to bring at least one of them before a jury on this count.

Thayer: Which one do you have your eye on?

Katzmann: Well, we'll soon see the two of them before us. We can make up our minds afterwards.

Thayer: Are the accused strictly isolated?

Inspector: We've temporarily placed them in the steel cages at the police jail.

Katzmann: They still have no idea that they are suspected of murder.

Thayer: Was any politically incriminating evidence found in their possession?

Katzmann: Both were carrying revolvers and Sacco had in his pocket a call for a meeting which was supposed to take place on May 9th in Clark Hall. Vanzetti wrote it. It was to have been a protest rally against Salsedo's death.

Thayer: That would have pleased the scoundrels. Yes, I am going to make certain right away that I preside over this trial. A precedent must be established and we

must teach these rabble rousers a lesson which will grant the states peace from foreign pests for a long time to come.

Katzmann: Until now we have only been able to make them responsible for bomb throwing or acts of violence which even when they had actually performed them couldn't cost them any sympathy among their kind, whether here or in Europe, since these were always political acts. But if we can now convict two respected agitators of common banditry, then we morally compromise the entire movement most severely.

Thayer: That would be very useful.—But now we should start with the hearing. First, call in the witness.

Inspector (*opens the door*): Mr. Levangie, please!

Enter Porter Michael Levangie.

Thayer: Question the witness, Prosecutor Katzmann. I would just like to get an impression while taking a look into the files.

Katzmann: Your name is Michael Levangie and you are porter at the Rice and Hutchins shoe factory. You were an eyewitness to the attack on the cashier Parmenter and the guard Berardelli on Pearl Street in South Braintree, right?

Levangie: Yes—that is—

Katzmann: Of course, you couldn't observe every last detail, but certainly you saw the occupant of the car with whom the murderers drove off clearly enough to recognize him again with certainty,—yes?

Levangie: I think at least—

Katzmann: You mean that memory can sometimes deceive. But as a rule that's only the case immediately after an exciting event. You need therefore not feel the least bit awkward that a couple of minutes after the shooting you at first told your acquaintance Henry McCarthey that you hadn't gotten a glimpse of any of the bandits. Perhaps you wished thereby to spare yourself the unpleasantness of being questioned as a witness in first place. Is that not the case?

Levangie: Perhaps that could be it.

Katzmann: In your interview with the police you stated that the man next to the driver was blond and of slight build.

Levangie: True enough—however—

Katzmann: But don't worry yourself, Mr. Levangie! We fully understand that you must first wait for your memory to focus. Today you know that at the time you were mistaken and that the bandit had a thick, dark mustache. You recognize him undoubtedly in this picture, no? (*Shows him Vanzetti's photograph.*)

Levangie: Yeah, it seems to me as if I'd seen him.

Katzmann: Naturally—he is the one you saw. He will be lead into this room here shortly. Commit his face once more to memory exactly. You will be an important and valuable witness for us in court and through the conviction of a most dangerous felon you will be performing a thoroughly commendable service for your fatherland.

Levangie: That would be a great honor for me.

Katzmann: Very good. Miss, please write: I, Michael Levangie, porter, hereby declare under oath, on the basis of considered reflection and in good conscience, that in the photograph presented to me of the fish peddler Bartolomeo Vanzetti I

recognize with complete certainty the man who sat in the car next to the driver at the murder in South Braintree on Pearl Street.—There. Now, sir, sign your name at the bottom.

Levangie (*signs it*).

Katzmann: Wait now until the accused enters the room. Look at him carefully and memorize his features exactly. You will have the opportunity to confirm this affidavit under oath before the jury.—Have Vanzetti sent in, Inspector.

Inspector (*opens the door*): Bring in the Italian remand prisoner Bartolomeo Vanzetti.

Thayer: You are a brave man, Mr. Levangie.

Vanzetti enters, between two police officers.

Levangie (*lets him pass by, takes a close look and exits.*)

Thayer: You are the anarchist Vanzetti?

Vanzetti: That's who I am and who I remain. And who are you?

Thayer: I am Judge Webster Thayer before whom you will have to answer for yourself.

Vanzetti: What is it you want from me?

Thayer: Prosecutor Frederic G. Katzmann will examine you in my presence so that I know what kind of a man I'm dealing with here.

Vanzetti: First I'd like to ask why I'm actually being held and being placed in the role of accused.

Katzmann: Oh, you know perfectly well.

Vanzetti: I only know that I've been treated like a criminal for 11 days without anyone having given me or my defender an explanation for it.

Katzmann: But you identify yourself as an anarchist.

Vanzetti: That I am. According to the Constitution of the United States, every resident in this country is free to the convictions which seem right to him, even those convictions which aspire to freedom and justice for the working men in this country, too.

Thayer: Your declaration of faith does not concern us. You are not being called to account because of your so-called convictions, rather because of unlawful activities in which they have expressed themselves.

Vanzetti: Which would be?

Katzmann: A loaded firearm was found in your possession, a .38-caliber Harrington and Richardson revolver, and four empty cartridges. What were you intending to do with those?

Vanzetti: I explained those sufficiently to the police. You don't mean to inform me that you wish to charge me on account of this trifle, do you? It's strange: the police continually desire political declarations from me, which they are forbidden to inquire about, and you initiate a grand preliminary examination because a peddler who often must travel long distances through these unsafe regions with large sums of money in his pocket carries a revolver which has never been used, along with four empty cartridges for a hunting gun.

Katzmann: Nonetheless, it is suspicious when a man carries weapons, presumably for his own self-defense, who has renounced the desire to take up weapons in defense of the state.

Vanzetti: I did that because I am an opponent of war and because I do not grant the State the right to claim for the use of capital the lives of workers who as it is are the victims of capital already.

Katzmann: Further, you have incriminated yourself through false statements to the police by denying acquaintances with other Italian radicals, which meanwhile have been proven.

Vanzetti: But in the case of investigations being conducted against others, I am not of any use to you. A revolutionary is not going to freely lighten your business of searching houses, making arrests and deporting people.

Katzmann: As has been discovered, you have also given misleading statements regarding where you had stopped and where you were going on the day you were arrested.

Vanzetti: So you are saying straight out that you had me arrested because of my radical views and because of my efforts on behalf of Salsedo and that you wish to deport me because I, just like Sacco, am not registered as a foreigner.

Katzmann: Your evasions as to your activities on the day of your arrest arouse the interest of the authorities to learn where you have been on certain other days.

Vanzetti: What days are those supposed to be?

Katzmann: Where were you on April 15th of this year?

Vanzetti: Today is the 16th of May—that's a whole month ago. Was I not selling fish in Plymouth on that day just as on all the others?

Katzmann: That's what I wanted to learn from you. Further: where were you staying on December 24, 1919?

Vanzetti: What am I, a memory genius? If you told me something or other special that occurred on these days that might be of importance to me, maybe I could recall.

Thayer: I think, Mr. Katzmann, that's sufficient. We can let the man be taken away again.

Vanzetti: And when will I learn why you are actually holding me?

Katzmann: Soon enough, Mr. Vanzetti! Inspector, please have Sacco brought in.
(*Vanzetti is lead out.*)
Sacco enters between two policemen.

Sacco (*as he steps forward*): I would finally like to learn what the point of this whole comedy is.

Thayer: I am seriously warning you to keep your disrespect for the authority of the state to yourself. We are performing justice here, not comedy.

Sacco: Certainly, justice perverted through misuse of legal clauses.

Katzmann: I am to examine you. Your name is Nicola Sacco and you reside in Stoughton.

Sacco: Yeah, yeah, in addition I am Italian, proletarian, conscientious objector, revolutionary, anarchist, and robbed of freedom by your justice without reason.

Thayer: In America no one is taken into custody without reason.

Sacco: But sometimes arrest is not the consequence of reasons but rather the cause. Have you already found reasons for my arrest, if I may ask?

Katzmann: You were armed without a license. At your arrest a fully-loaded .32-caliber revolver was taken off your person, and you were carrying an additional 22 cartridges.

Sacco: I carried the revolver earlier on orders of my employer. I wanted to fire off the cartridges in the woods so as not to leave them laying around the house upon departing for Italy. If you would like to know any more, please make it short and don't burden me with questions that I've answered to the police ten times already.

Katzmann: You lied to the police; you claimed not to know the Italian Boda, although you had just come from his house and intended to pick up his car from the mechanics.

Sacco: There are obligations of comradeship for us revolutionary workers which I will fulfill no less for your examination than I did for the police. What you wish to know about my friends' every activity and about our relationships to one another your informants will tell you without a doubt more honestly than I will.

Thayer: You would be smarter not to put off through obstinacy the men who will be sitting in judgment over you, but rather to forthrightly answer their questions.

Sacco: At present, I am still waiting for a truthful answer to the question as to what the purpose is of my arrest. When will you release me to my family?

Katzmann: We'll see about that.—Where were you on April 15th?

Sacco: We'll have to see about that.

Katzmann: You can no longer recall?

Sacco: Most likely I was working.—Middle of April I was also once at the Italian consulate in Boston. Whether that was precisely on the 15th, I don't know exactly at the moment.

Katzmann: That's good. About anything further you will be informed soon.

Sacco: If you wish to deport me, then don't wait too long to inform me about it. I can live well enough outside a country in which my friend Salsedo was tortured to death.

Thayer: Silence!—Take this shameless bum out of here!

(Sacco is lead out.)

Katzmann: They're dangerous fellows, the both of them. I think we'll swiftly and silently pass judgment on Vanzetti for the attack in Bridgewater and in the process accumulate the files with which we can finish off Sacco and Vanzetti together in the Braintree affair.

Thayer: Understood, prosecutor!

C u r t a i n.

Scene 4

August 17, 1920

Prison cell in Brockton.

Sacco, attorney Thompson, guard.

Thompson (*has just entered*): Leave me now alone with my client. (*To Sacco*): I have managed for Vanzetti to be together with you in this cell.

Sacco: That's wonderful. I'm eager to see him again. But quickly tell me, have they dared to convict him?

Thompson: It was the craziest trial that I have ever taken part in. As Judge Thayer entered the court he had already convicted Vanzetti.

Sacco: But it's sheer madness to accuse Vanzetti of such a deed. You said his alibi had been fully proven.

Thompson: We produced 18 witnesses who confirmed that they saw him on the day of the attack selling fish in Plymouth. We submitted the express shipping receipt that left no room for doubt that he received live eels on that day and therefore must have been at the train station. But when judges wish one to be guilty, then they pronounce him guilty.

Sacco: How harshly have they sentenced him?

Thompson: 15 years in prison. Now, we won't leave it at that.

Sacco: There will be a public sensation.

Thompson: Everything sensational was avoided in the trial. It went forward without any appearance of the usual advance notice, even though it was a hearing with a political backdrop.

Sacco: Maybe one wanted precisely to obscure the political character of the trial.

Thompson: Apparently. Obviously Vanzetti was connected with the crime only because he is a radical.

Sacco: They could have just as easily suspected me.

Thompson: Certainly. Katzmann's witnesses would have incriminated anyone he had set before them.

Sacco: And the victims of the assault themselves?

Thompson: They couldn't say anything at all. They sat in the car, were shot at from another car and shot back. Both, White as well as Cox, only saw their assailants from behind as they were already fleeing.

Sacco: What will you do in order to reverse the judgment?

Thompson: I have offered \$20,000 bail to effect Vanzetti's provisional release. Then he'll be able to assist himself in preparing the appeal of the trial.

Sacco: \$20,000—such an enormous fortune?

Thompson: Thayer explained that his release is out of the question regardless. I am raising the money anyhow; the case is too horrible.

Sacco: Judges are in the service of capital. Vanzetti is dangerous to capital,—the appeal won't be conducted with any less partisanship than the main hearing.

Thompson: If necessary, I will call Governor Fuller in Boston. He is a straight-thinking man.

Sacco (*laughs*): Then he would hardly have been Governor of Massachusetts for so long.—Listen, doors are being shut. They're bringing Vanzetti.

Guard with Rosa Sacco.

Sacco (*hugs her*): Ah! You! How are you? How's Dante?

Rosa: He sends you the flowers from our garden and asks you to please come home soon.

Sacco: Better today than tomorrow.—You know that Vanzetti has been convicted?
Rosa: It's terrible. They can't lay a trap for you, though, Nicola?
Sacco: Heaven forbid. For the moment they're not accusing me of anything beyond carrying a weapon without a permit.
Rosa: But how long that's taking already!
Thompson: On May 26th Judge Avri from the district court in Quincy sent the case to the jury court, and on June 11th the Plymouth jury informed Judge Thayer that charges would be brought against your husband because of the revolver. At the same time, proceedings against Vanzetti were underway for the robbery and assault in Bridgewater.
Rosa: Can nothing be done then to free Nicola? He's already been here over three months, and I am expecting.
Sacco: You must not lose heart, darling. They will hold me here a little while longer and torment me with their interrogations, and once they've convinced themselves that I can keep silent about the movement just as well as Salsedo and Elia, then they'll send me back to Italy.
Rosa: If only things were so far along already. America has become a real torture chamber.
Sacco: Everywhere chains and prison await those of us who struggle for freedom for all.
(Clanging of doors. Hard footsteps.)
Vanzetti is led in by the Inspector and police officers.
Inspector: In here. You're staying temporarily with the remand prisoner Sacco. *(Exit with escort.)*
Vanzetti: This is the first good news I've heard in a long time. Good day, Sacco. Ah—comrade Rosa. And you're here, too, Attorney Thompson. Thank you for your efforts, even if it was in vain.
Thompson: No need to get discouraged yet.
Vanzetti: That's not in my nature.
Sacco: We want to see what else the gentlemen have in store for us. Things won't get boring for the two of us together here in the state boarding house.
Rosa: We won't be lazy outside, either, and you, comrade Vanzetti, are as little forgotten as Nicola.
Vanzetti: I took a peek yesterday into the gas chambers of our enemies. We can expect nothing good from them.
Thompson: The question as to whether you will be provisionally set free must have been decided in the meantime. Prosecutor Katzmann has promised to let me know personally, since he is coming to Brockton today.
Vanzetti: He must be here in the building. I saw his car parked below and I definitely recognized his chauffeur.
Rosa: Oh, then maybe they'll let you leave with me right away,—then I was right, Nicola, that you'd be out soon.
Sacco: Let's not place too much faith in the generosity of Mr. Katzmann or Mr. Thayer.
Vanzetti: A tiger would sooner be generous toward a lamb than these people would be toward anarchists.

Prosecutor Katzmann is let in.

Thompson: Do you come with the decision on the acceptance of my client Vanzetti's bail?

Katzmann: The request has been rejected. It was found that there is reason to suspect that the peddler Bartolomeo Vanzetti, convicted of the attack in Bridgewater, may also have taken part in the robbery-murder in South Braintree on April 15th.

Vanzetti: What?

Sacco: That's just too much! You could just as easily make the same claim against me.

Katzmann: On that point the last word has not yet been spoken, Mr. Sacco!

Rosa: For heaven sakes! Nicola!

Sacco: Easy, Rosa, that's all nonsense.

Thompson: And what is the basis for this new suspicion?

Katzmann: The Buick with which the action in Bridgewater was carried out was apparently the same one that was used in the Pearl Street crime. In addition, the accused made contradictory statements regarding his whereabouts on April 15th.

Vanzetti: I tried to tell the truth; I never would have dreamed that someone would come here and tell me that on April 15th I had committed theft and murder.

Katzmann: I will hand over the written decision about the bail to you down stairs, Attorney Thompson. Are you coming?

Thompson: Chins up, my friends!

Rosa: Nicola! My Nicola!

Sacco: Go to our Dante, dearest. Tell him that he need not be ashamed of his father, whatever might happen.

Vanzetti: We have a hard fight ahead of us, Sacco!

Sacco: We will fight like men.

Vanzetti: And like revolutionaries.

C u r t a i n.

Scene 5.

July 14, 1921

Lobby outside the courtroom in Dedham.

Groups of witnesses, men and women, servants of the court, police officers, newspaper correspondents, jurists, workers.

In the foreground a group of defenders: William G. Thompson, Fred H. Moore, I. A. McAnarney.

Moore: I admit that I accepted the roll of lead defender in this case very unwillingly. Judge Thayer shows undisguised animosity towards me.

McAnarney: This court is not favorably disposed toward any of us. Yesterday, Thayer yelled to us, "Get lost!", when we were negotiating with Katzmann. Have you ever seen such a trial?

Thompson: It's worse than when Vanzetti alone stood accused. Of all our collaborators not a single one believes in the guilt of the two. At the jury selection Thayer and

Katzmann rejected no less than 500 proposals and they worked over the rest by every means with the accusation in mind.

McAnarney: From among all the proposed jurors they found just seven they could trust would collaborate in judicial murder.

Moore: Whoever has the heart to assume the role of juror in this case also has the heart to pronounce his guilty verdict.

Thompson: After the failure with the 500, Judge Thayer ordered his sheriff to bring out a further 15 persons from among the on-lookers and—these were his words—wider circles.

Moore: I know that Prosecutor Katzmann had nine members of a freemasons meeting brought from the same lodge he himself belongs to and of which the murdered Parmenter was also a member.

McAnarney: Only the gods know where the last five jurors came from. They were all of a sudden there.

Thompson: And how the witnesses were treated! When the fisherman Corel stated that on April 15th while he was painting his boat he had an hour-long conversation with Vanzetti—this scornful laugh from Katzmann with the question how he could remember the date so precisely. Then came the enlightening answer that his wife's birthday was two days later and they wanted to go for a ride in the boat. After that the judge just sent the witness away.

McAnarney: He does that with every alibi witness. Nine credible people swore under oath that they were with Sacco in Boston on the day of the murder, among them Prof. Guadagul, a careful man; before his departure, the Italian consulate official Giuseppe Andrower left for the professor written confirmation that on April 15th he had to reject the photograph of the Sacco family because it was too big for the passport,—but Katzmann maintains that Sacco used the day off to travel to South Braintree instead of Boston and there commit a robbery-murder.

Moore: Of 33 witnesses 27 favor the accused—and against them this mob of informers, not a single one of whom has stayed with his initial testimony.

Thompson: The two bookkeepers from Slater and Morill, Ms. Splaine and Ms. Drevlin, first declare that they couldn't swear Sacco to have been the man they claim to have seen. Later, they swear to it nonetheless. Same story with that man Pelzer and the gramophone salesman Goodridge.

Moore: The most dangerous ones are that porter Levangie and the tramp Lola Andrews. Any judge with the slightest sense of responsibility would have to chase them from the court room despite every assurance of their belated assertions.

McAnarney: I would like to know how much cash was paid for their perjury.—By the way,—I see Levangie standing over there. I'll have a chat with him.—Hey, Mr. Levangie!

(McAnarney separates from the group and steps aside with Levangie.)

McAnarney: Say, Mr. Levangie, don't you want to think it over before you send two honorable men to the electric chair?

Levangie: I can't help it that it was Vanzetti.

McAnarney: If he was the one, you certainly can't help it. But earlier you yourself had doubts whether the man you thought you had recognized was the right one.

Levangie: Me? Never!

McAnarney: Just one second. Never? When I was at your house two weeks before the trial began you personally confirmed to me that you couldn't identify any of the bandits with certainty.

Levangie: I couldn't have said that.

McAnarney: You said that. Your own co-worker John L. Sullivan attests to it, you yourself recounted our conversation to him.

Levangie: Then he's a liar.

McAnarney: Immediately after the murder you said to Henry McCarthy that you hadn't seen the culprits at all. Then you told the shipping agent Alexander Victorson that it would be tough for anyone to recognize the murderers. Later, you swore to the shoe maker Edward Carter that the man looked blond—and now you maintain that it was Vanzetti?

Levangie: It was definitely Vanzetti. I saw him one year ago already in Prosecutor Katzmann's office. Any confusion is absolutely impossible.

McAnarney: Man, just think about your previous statements.

(McAnarney leaves him standing there. Both recede into the background.)

In the foreground Ms. Lola Andrews and Ms. Julia Campbell become visible.

Ms. Campbell: You should be ashamed, taking an oath so lightly. That's not all true, what you've told them.

Ms. Andrews: Leave me alone. I want to know what business you've got here.

Campbell: I read in the newspaper what you claimed to the jury, and I wrote Judge Thayer right away that I am an older woman of good character and I was there, and that it isn't true that you asked the man lying under the car where the entrance to the Rice and Hutchins factory is.

Andrews: But that's the truth.

Campbell: It's a lie. I'm the one who asked and not a man lying under the car, there wasn't anyone lying there, but one standing behind the car, and he was neither Sacco nor Vanzetti.

Andrews: You just want to stand out and make yourself important so the newspaper will say that Judge Thayer invited you to be a witness.

Campbell: He didn't invite me at all. He had me notified that no value will be place on my statements.

Andrews: There, you see! So what on earth do you want here?

Campbell: I want to let the defense examine me.

Andrews: Then I'll make you out to be a liar.

Campbell: You? The tailor Harry Kurlanstej from Quincy has also contacted the defense. You told him yourself that the police brought you to the Dedham prison to show you the two men, but you couldn't say anything because you had never seen the two of them before.

Andrews: I say what I know, and Sacco was the one lying under the car.

Campbell: Then I'm saying what I know and I'm going to have Ms. Laura Allen called on so that she can state why she'll never rent you another room: because every night you bring home a different man and because you're such a liar that no one wants to be seen with you anymore.

(They disappear into the background of the lobby.)

Police Inspector (*calls out*): The break is over. Witnesses and observers need to return to the court room. The accused are to be brought back in!

(The lobby slowly empties.)

Attorney Thompson passes by with Rosa Sacco.

Thompson: Stay strong, Mrs. Sacco! If your husband sees you smiling, it will be easier for him to keep his nerves.

Rosa: Smiling! They've sent their informants after me to my house! I'm supposed to be used to betray the father of my children to the executioner!—Is there still hope of acquittal?

Thompson: If the jury gives a guilty sentence today,—believe me, it couldn't end with that. Sacco and Vanzetti have good friends,—including their defense team.

Rosa: The proletariat of the entire world would cry out! O, how I hate them—the state with its bailiffs.

(Exit both into the court room.)

There remain in the lobby a few newspaper correspondents, among them Nicolaus Beffel, Elizabeth R. Bernkopf and Frank P. Sibley. Close to the courtroom door three Italian workers are standing quietly in the background.

Sibley: I am going to keep waiting until Judge Thayer comes. Maybe he'll want to give a statement to the press.

Beffel: I have a statement for him.

A Journalist: I'd be curious to hear that.

Mrs. Bernkopf: Do you think the trial will be finished today?

Sibley: Without a doubt. After the judge's announcement that the ballistics expert Proctor, contrary to the other experts, has testified that one of the five bullets in Berardelli's body came from Sacco's revolver, he'll want to conclude the hearing of evidence. That was the prosecution's final trump.

Mrs. Bernkopf: I sure didn't find the announcement convincing. Why wasn't Proctor brought before the court in person? Why wasn't his opinion at least read aloud *verbatim*?

Beffel: There are peculiarities in these proceedings.

A Journalist: From the start we've been trying to guide the public's understanding toward a better view of the prosecution's position.

Sibley: In service of a higher purpose.

A Journalist: Be quiet! Here come the accused.

Sacco and Vanzetti are led through the lobby under heavy guard, strongly shackled.
The three workers go toward them.

A Worker: Comrades, courage! We're fighting for you!

A Policeman: Stand back!

Sacco and Vanzetti wave to the workers.

(Away into the court room, the workers as well.)

Thayer and Katzmann enter the lobby.

Katzmann: We should be satisfied with the result of the hearing, even if it can't be denied that every week the appearance of the accused has been arousing sympathy even in those circles which had not previously embraced them.

Thayer: The devil take them! Ultimately, it's not about the two characters and the murder, but about the subversive ideas they babble.

Katzmann: Granted, but still we must preserve appearances. What's most annoying for me is that the informants, the so-called undercover agents who Palmer sent me, have been worthless. Ruzzamenti, who was supposed to be installed as a boarder at Mrs. Sacco's place, made shameless demands for money and then simply went over into the service of the defense, and Carbone, whom we placed in the cell next to Sacco, couldn't manage to tempt one word from the rogue.

Thayer: There's nothing to lament, Prosecutor. The jurors are brilliant. I won't forget to effectively instruct them once more before they reach their verdict.

Katzmann: If only the mood was better outside.

Thayer: I see that the reporters are waiting here. I'll go speak with them.
(*Katzmann exits into the court room*)

Thayer: Now, ladies and gentlemen, today will be the crowning of our labors. Two bandits will receive their deserved punishment.

Sibley: You are convinced that the jury will answer the question of their guilt in the affirmative?

Thayer: But you've heard for yourselves our instructions to the jurors at the start of the trial. They'll remember them, I think.

Mrs. Bernkopf: Nonetheless, the defense has done everything it could to win public opinion for their clients.

Thayer: The defense, these stupid fools! Just take a look at their head, Mr. Fred Moore, this long-haired anarchist from California.—No, public opinion for the prosecution is excellent. The court will show itself equal to its task of guarding the existing order against the criminality of these radicals.

A Journalist: I guarantee you, Judge Thayer, that the American press is fully conscious of its obligation to support the court in this.

Thayer: To the press is owed great thanks for their work during the weeks of the main hearing. They have instructed the public extensively about just what sort of considerable fellows are being made out to be harmless in this trial. One must do away with the anarchists once and for all.

Beffel: In so far as they commit crimes, Judge!

Thayer: Whatever, we'll get them soon enough. We must show the radicals we'll string these guys up. More than anything I'd love to have a dozen of these radicals strung up on the gallows!

Beffel: My name, Judge Thayer, is Nicolaus Beffel; I'm a correspondent for the Federated Press. I have received a communication from the Italian consul in Boston, Marquis A. Ferrante, which I would like to bring to your attention. The consul herein brings to the attention of us newspaper reporters that the Italian government is taking a strong interest in this case and maintains every confidence that the trial will be conducted without regard to the radical views of the accused.—Here is the letter. Would you like to read it yourself?

Thayer: Ridiculous! Just wait! I'll show you, alright! (*Exit into the court room, furious.*)

A Journalist: How could you do that, Colleague Beffel! You're hurting the cause we should all be serving.

Mrs. Bernkopf: Come into the courtroom. It's starting any minute now.

(Exit all into the court room. The scene grows dark. One can see into the court room through a beam of light):

Katzmann (*pleading*): The proof is conclusive in every way. Consider all the facts together that I have presented to you: the car, with which they carried out the deed—that very Buick which they wanted to pick up secretly from the garage of Simon Johnson, after it was damaged during their escapade; the weapons of the two men, their lies and contradictions.—The accused, bold criminals, full of hate for the holy order of our society, deserters and conspirators, have been shown to be guilty beyond doubt to have with premeditation attacked, murdered and robbed citizens of the United States, the cashier Parmenter and the guard Berardelli of the Slater and Morrill Shoe Company. I call for a guilty verdict against them from the jury. I call for a sentence of death.

(In the beam of light):

Thompson: These men cannot be sentenced to death for such a crime as long as they have a right to say: The government of this great country placed informers in my cell, attempted to put informers in my wife's apartment, had my friends spied on. The spies put the money for the defense in their own pockets and had their fun with it. You can not condemn these men as murderers because you dislike their views. The murder has not only not been proven against them; rather it is proven that they did not have even the slightest part in it. They committed no crime, but the verdict that pronounced them guilty would be an outrageous crime.

(In the beam of light):

Sacco: My crime, the only one for which I am responsible, proudly responsible, is my dream of a better life which grows out of brotherly love, out of solidarity, out of joyful mutual aid—in a word, that I am an anarchist. I remain proud of this crime, even if I must perish beneath the executioner's hands.

(In the beam of light):

Vanzetti: I am and remain until my last breath an anarchist, because I believe that anarchy is the only human form of social relation and because I know that only freedom benefits, ennobles and perfects people.

(In the beam of light):

Thayer: —that these murderers and bandits are people without religion, without patriotism, foreigners, who already during the War through their desertion showed that they are unworthy of America's hospitality. Go, then, jurors and do your duty in memory of the men who did their duty for us in Flanders fields!

(Light on the stage—as before. Short pause.)

A Journalist (*bursts from court room*): Both guilty! Unanimously condemned to death!

C u r t a i n.

Scene 6.

October 4, 1923

Meeting of workers in a hall in Boston.

At the head table are sitting an Italian worker, Rosa Sacco, Thompson.

Michelangelo Musmanno leads the meeting.

Noise, Shouts: Let Sacco and Vanzetti out! Down with dollar-justice!
Death to capitalist society!

Chairman Musmanno: Comrades! The Defense Committee for Sacco and Vanzetti has called this meeting in order that the workers of Massachusetts might hear straight from the mouth of our friend, William G. Thompson, what course the efforts of all upright men and of the proletariat of the entire world have taken, in order to save the innocent, condemned revolutionaries from mortal danger and to achieve their complete vindication and liberation.

The history of the proletarian liberation movement in the United States is simultaneously the history of outrageous crimes on the part of the ruling class against all who have recognized the dreadful position of the exploited class and have attempted to prepare the way by which the working part of humanity must come into possession of the land and the means of production and thereby obtain justice and freedom. Forever unforgotten stands the shameful judicial murder which in Chicago in 1887 was carried out against the leaders of the struggle for the eight-hour work day, our comrades Spieß, Parsons, Fischer, Lingg and Engel, and which was the first great feat of the American justice system in the service of American capital. Since then, judicial outrage has followed upon judicial outrage, judicial murder upon judicial murder in America and in all the other capitalist lands. Every strike was a signal to further violations of the law. The power politics of the U.S. regarding Mexico's oil fields and the control of the world's financial markets was simultaneously the politics of war, which led to entry into the world-wide slaughter and the politics of enslavement of the workers in our own country. Remember the demonstrations by the Ku Klux Klan bandits in San Francisco on July 22, 1916 for the annexation of Mexico. An explosion scattered the demonstrators. Remember how comrades Tom Mooney and Warren Billings, who had nothing to do with the explosion, were then prosecuted. That Tom Mooney was "pardoned" to lifelong imprisonment was all that could be accomplished with mountains of proof of the comrades' innocence. To this day they continue to wait in prison for their release.

Since this time, since after the victory in the World War it must have become clear even to the most stupid for just what kind of justice the American worker offered up his blood,—but since even in Russia a people cast down their oppressors and put world-wide capital in fear for its stolen riches,—since this time the state's battle for the submission of the proletariat has become many times more severe. The prosperity of America's capitalist economy is only superficial. In reality, America is experiencing a harsh economic crisis. Europe has become too weak to absorb American goods. The market is flooded with gold, and the bourgeoisie is trembling before the proletariat which is becoming conscious of its power. That's why the young adventurers of plutocracy have armed themselves and staged one assault after the other against revolutionary workers, against the meeting houses of the I.W.W. and against the institutions of proletarian organizations. In Italy, the home of our comrades Sacco and Vanzetti, until now one of the most liberal countries in the world, a radical change has taken place,

which has dared there for the first time to strip the state apparatus of all legal and constitutional constraints on the exploiters in their battle of extermination against the exploited. The example of fascism has found in the North American United States the most willing students. Think of the bloody deeds of Centralia, of the terrorist acts during the miners' strike in West-Virginia,—where were the judges then? They don't know how to find any murderers from the ranks of the Ku Klux Klan. But the shameful deeds of the fascists whom they conceal by not prosecuting them, these they themselves surpass in the judgments with which they castigate the victims of these shameful deeds. The justice system climbed the highest peak of malice with the conviction of our friends Sacco and Vanzetti for common robbery-murder, an event of which they were completely unaware until after they had been brought into connection with it. It has come to this in America: because we are revolutionaries, because we are anarchists, one can dare lead us as murderers onto the scaffold while the bourgeoisie, depraved and degenerate to the core, cries out, "Hurrah!"

(Boo-ing.) (Long live Sacco and Vanzetti!)

Now, before Attorney Thompson delivers his report, I will yield the floor to our dear comrade Rosa Sacco, the brave, loyal companion of Nicola Sacco.

(The assembly extends her an ovation.)

She will tell us about her last meeting with Sacco and Vanzetti and what she has to report to us about them.

Rosa: Comrades! I bring you greetings from my husband who is once again in the Dedham prison, together with his companion in misery. Greetings and thanks from comrade Vanzetti, as well. They were very happy to learn that the defense committee is not satisfied simply to take the necessary legal steps to obtain an appeal, but has succeeded in awakening the outrage of the entire world's working men at the crime that has been committed against them. For in truth this crime is being committed against the workers of the whole world. Our friends know very well that justice and righteousness are two different things and that the justice of States can be jolted into honest action only by the will power of those to whom the concepts of justice and truth aren't just billboards to deceive simple minds, but rather are the pillars of freedom upon which the world of socialism should be founded. *(Approval.)* They believe in the strength of the proletariat, when it is driven on by unity in the struggle and by belief in the triumph of the revolution. *(Applause.)*

Comrades! My poor Nicola has been through some hard months. At the end of 1922 he began to suffer unbearable agonies and Thayer dismissed all complaints with underhanded evasions. Sacco then went on hunger strike in February, which he kept up for a full 30 days, until March 17th. An important hearing was scheduled for the day before, about which Attorney Thompson will speak more fully. But Sacco was so weakened from refusing to eat that he was unable to present his case. The hearing had to be postponed. Now Thayer is sending him to a mental institution, that is, he's putting him at the mercy of the psychiatrists, likely in the hope that a radical can at least be disposed of as a mental case, just in case it turns out that he can't be branded a murderer. The Idea is thus to be discredited. *(Approval.)* The judge was not to be disappointed by the

doctors. On April 10th they declared Sacco insane and Thayer sent him to the criminal lunatic asylum in Bridgewater. I know, my friends, that Sacco's mind wasn't dulled for a second. When I went to him with our son Dante and our little Ines, who was born after her father had already been imprisoned,—I didn't need to comfort him, he comforted me and us. But the thought that keeps him physically and mentally strong is the great cause of Revolution, Socialism and Anarchy. Even the Bridgewater doctors couldn't pass off such a clear mind, such a calm and stable person as crazy for too long. On September 10th he was released as having been cured and is now with Vanzetti in the Dedham prison. I have extended to you the two comrades' greetings and bring you their vow that, whatever may happen, they will remain true to the Idea and remain conscious of their revolutionary duty. I ask that I might be allowed to also offer them your greetings and your guarantee that you won't grow weary in the struggle for their liberation. Help me and my children to recover husband and father,—but for yourselves and for the world-wide proletariat, save two honorable and righteous fighters for the liberation of the working class!

(Great applause and cheers)

Musmanno: Your applause confirms for comrade Rosa that all hearts are with the prisoners and that you desire her to extend to comrades Sacco and Vanzetti our brotherly and resolute solidarity, our greetings and warm wishes. I give the floor to their defender Thompson.

Thompson (*greeted with applause*): I don't want to let the bitter feelings which fill me in view of the attitude of this country's authorities follow upon the words of love. You should hear hard facts which might offer you insight into the current state of affairs. The external occasion for the presentation of this report is the fact that yesterday, on October 3, 1923, the lead defense counsel, my colleague Fred H. Moore, presented Judge Thayer with supplementary motions for a retrial, after the defense team had already on October 29, 1921 requested the annulment of the judgment and a few days later the main appeals for the retrial had then been registered at the Dedham courthouse. Judge Thayer rejected our request for retrial on December 24, 1921, and after we had then filed a new petition with the familiar grounds and considerations on July 22nd, the execution of the formalities was then repeatedly delayed with various excuses. Sacco's hunger strike and his alleged mental illness were put forward as a pretext and finally, on April 30th of this year, the hearing was delayed for an undetermined length of time, as one of the prosecuting attorneys supposedly fell ill.

The essential factors in our new appeals are based on the following inquiries. The witness Lola Andrews, on the strength of whose mendacious testimony the guilty verdict against Sacco primarily rests, had on September 11, 1922 in a sworn affidavit completely retracted her testimony before the jury. Shortly before the submission of our appeal, however, on March 8th, the prosecutor was able to present a notarized statement of the same witness, wherein she retracted this retraction and maintained her trial testimony. Therefore, we had to supply further material regarding the moral character of this hysterical person, whose testimony should never have been taken into account from the start. In our new document are more importantly the statements of two former Department of

Justice officials, Lawrence Letherman and Fred F. Weyand, who confirm from personal knowledge the use of paid informants. In the reports the men furthermore assert that in the Department of Justice everyone is, and was from the beginning, of the opinion that Sacco and Vanzetti never had anything to do with the South Braintree crime and that the Boston authorities need only pull the documents from their files in order to remove every trace of doubt against the condemned men. Letherman writes that he himself, like almost all senior officials, was always of the opinion that the murder could only have been committed by professional criminals. He mentions the name of an informant used by Mr. West, a creature of Prosecutor Katzmann, who himself was then condemned for serious robbery and now is serving his sentence in the Massachusetts state prison. The other source, Fred Weyand, implicates a certain Weiß, also a tool of Katzmann, through revelation of the maneuverings with the informant Ruzzamenti. Weiß, who at the time was a government official, knew full well that Sacco and Vanzetti were no murderers. He said to Weyand openly that that didn't play any role, but that they were bad seeds and they had to get what they deserved. (*Commotion.*) One must remember the statement of a prominent American personality, that it would be better that Sacco and Vanzetti die, even if they are innocent, than that the people's conception of the unimpeachability of the court and the law be shaken by their release,—then one will understand Weyand's claim that the conviction was the result of the collaboration of the officials of the Boston Justice Department with the District Attorney's office.

I mention further that even from the previously mentioned Felix Weiß a letter could be produced wherein he himself admits his relationship to the informants and confesses that he had reported to Katzmann of his knowledge of the anarchist movement in general and of Sacco's participation in the Galleani anarchist group in particular. "When Katzmann asked me," it says in the letter, "what I thought about Sacco's participation in the robbery-murder at Braintree, I explained to him that anarchists don't commit crimes for money but for a principle and that robbery is not part of their agenda." They have then all acted contrary to better knowledge.

Also of significance is the deposition, reproduced in our appeals, of the ballistics expert Proctor, whose ostensible testimony that the bullet in Berardelli's body was from Sacco's gun formed the keystone of the contrived evidential edifice. After the conviction Proctor declared under oath that the opportunity to form a judgment had never been given to him. "Had I been asked directly," he says, "whether I had found positive evidence, I would have already then answered 'No,' as I do now."

We have stressed repeatedly that the stolen quantity of money—\$15,776—must have gone somewhere. Sacco and Vanzetti, however, were the same poor workers after the robbery and murder as before.—Yet, why all this trouble? A glance into the archives of the Department of Justice office would suffice to destroy with one blow suspicion, charge and verdict. In the five retrial appeals that the defense has submitted this demand has been made. The Attorney

General is called upon once and for all to allow such an inspection. He has never even responded to this request.

I, my friends and listeners, am no anarchist, no revolutionary, rather a conservative citizen of this state. But I insist on justice and therefore I say: A government which is more concerned with its own secrets than with the lives of its citizens has become a tyranny.

C u r t a i n.

Scene 7

November 18, 1925.

Prison cell in Dedham.

Sacco standing, Vanzetti leaning on his bunk.

Vanzetti: Damn! This weariness in my limbs—still.

Sacco: But it's been half a year already since they declared you healthy.

Vanzetti: Healthy! Five and a half years in the hands of the American justice system is one fine convalescence for you!

Sacco: And over four of those years with the chair charged-up under your behind, so to speak.

Vanzetti: I'll tell you, they let me have a little foretaste of this instrument's good services in Charlestown.

Sacco: It was cruel of them to take you there.

Vanzetti: What they haven't cooked up in these years in order to let us feel their power.

Sacco: Once they had failed to degrade me as mentally disturbed, then they tried it all over again with you.

Vanzetti: They started out really clever. They weren't too far from getting me to lose my mind. A refined torment: they housed me directly next to the machine shop where the electric chair was experimented on—for months and months I had to listen to the clatter and ticking which today or tomorrow or next year was to be my funeral music. I have been able to thoroughly study the technology of judicial murder.

Sacco: They're teaching us how one treats defenseless class enemies once they are in one's power. The proletariat should take notice of it for the day when the tables are turned.

Vanzetti: We proletarians wouldn't be able to manage such brutality. I would press up against the bars of the cell and listen—I couldn't do otherwise. And in the dark still of the night I would hear those poor men groan who the chair was being prepared for.

Sacco: Did you sometimes catch a glimpse of them, too?

Vanzetti: No, I saw none of them with my own eyes. But with my imagination I saw them all. I saw them with my ears, which received the noise of the machine—day and night.

Sacco: Was there no rest, then?

Vanzetti: For three weeks, before a person is murdered by the state, an engineer checks the device to make sure that everything is in order. One evening it was terrible. The weeks of experimenting were over and the condemned was to be put to death. It turned 12 midnight. The people in the machine room were silent. All at once we heard a distinct bang, like a weak explosion, and the light in the corridor went blue. Then a hoarse voice said: "The cycle is complete; a poor devil has gone to Hell."

Sacco: That's just horrible.

Vanzetti: I begged and begged for them to take me away from that wing of the prison. No one did anything. I thought I would have to go crazy, and that's exactly what the tormenters wanted. Just as they thought it had gone that far, a guard came to me and ordered: Get dressed!—Without further explanation they brought me to the insane asylum.

Sacco: How long did you have to stay there?

Vanzetti: Four months, from December 26, 1924 until April 23, 1925. But the agonies of the year in Charlestown—first in purgatory next to the electric chair, then in the maniacs' hell, I feel them to this day.

Sacco: Were you able to work in Charlestown?

Vanzetti: I suppose I wrote a little, nothing of significance. It's going a little better here now. Listen to this, Sacco, I recently wrote a poem. Do you want to hear it?

Sacco: Yes, naturally, recite it at once!

Vanzetti: It is called "Vision":

"We wear shackles around our ankles
and atone.
We suffer in this filthy dark dungeon alone
and atone.
But you, you outside—
you carry us forth, our chains you have broken.
The gaping prison gate bursts open
and we hear the decree, the single decree:
The world is free—is free—is free!"

Sacco: That's very beautiful. Write it down for me. Dante must learn it. If Rosa comes today with the children, I'll give it to him.

Vanzetti: Yes, you have your people here,—I must converse with my Muse.

Sacco: Don't be unfair, Vanzetti. The comrades haven't abandoned you.

Vanzetti: That is true. But, to be honest, I envy you for the affections you receive.

Sacco: And I envy you your knowledge, your talent, your intellectual life.

Vanzetti: So we're both envious and have no justification for it. We exchange what we have, friend. Your children hug me, too, and you learn with me from the books of the philosophers, poets, the revolutionary teachers.

Sacco: And our study of the English language makes it easier for us to read the American newspapers.

Vanzetti: And the petitions of our defense. Otherwise we never would have gotten through the petition from July 21st.

Sacco: The question is, when will the Supreme Court be done reading it? It is a thick volume.

Vanzetti: I have damned little faith that we'll have any more luck with that mighty tome than we did with all the previous appeals and petitions.

Sacco: In the worst case, Thompson's great hope lies ultimately with Governor Fuller.

Vanzetti: We have only one hope: the proletariat.

Sacco: Right. You know, however it turns out, if it must be, we will ascend the chair with the knowledge that the workers of the whole world have come together in protest against our mistreatment.

Vanzetti: It is uplifting and it will give us the strength to act like men.

Sacco: Yes, Vanzetti, we will remain standing in the battle like good communards until the last, looking our enemies in the face. And up until the last breath we'll tell our comrades that we have trust in them and in the solidarity of the workers of the whole world.

Vanzetti: Victims must fall and will always fall. Our death will only be an episode in the eternal war between the forces of tyranny and freedom. Two fighters more who fall—what would that mean? So many fall—only the Idea cannot fall.

Sacco: On one side the cause of justice and the future, on the other the reasons of state. Which will be the stronger?

A Prisoner enters.

Prisoner (*fills the water pitcher, pulls a newspaper out from under his apron, passes it hurriedly to Sacco*): There, quick, take it! The Portuguese from the other wing sends it to you. You should look through it carefully.

Sacco: The Portuguese? Greet him and my thanks—to you, too, comrade.

(*Exit Prisoner.*)

Sacco: A Portuguese newspaper—strange.

Vanzetti: What is he thinking,—does he expect you would understand his language?

Sacco: Let's see,—maybe there's a message hidden inside (*turns the pages*).

Vanzetti: Wait, a piece of paper fell out.

Sacco (*picks it up, reads*): What?!—Vanzetti!—But that's just not possible!—
Vanzetti!—Brother!

Vanzetti: What are you getting so excited about? What is it? Read it to me!

Sacco: Listen, listen! (*reads aloud*): "I hereby admit that I took part in the crimes at South Braintree. Sacco and Vanzetti were not there. Celestino Madeiros."

Vanzetti (*jumps up*): A beam of light! Nicola! (*hugs Sacco.*)

Sacco: Rosa! My children!

Vanzetti: Calm down, friend, we have to think about this. What will you do?

Sacco: Thompson must be notified at once and above all the Defense Committee.

Vanzetti: You write to the lawyer, I'll write to Musmanno.

Sacco: Do you believe, Bartolomeo?—Do you believe that it can be our salvation?

Vanzetti: It is the definitive proof of our innocence.—But—let's not forget the reasons of state!

C u r t a i n.

Scene 8
June 17, 1926.

Thayer's office in Dedham.
Thayer and several court officials sitting at a desk.
Before them Thompson.

Thompson: The Constitution of the United States, Judge Thayer, has placed the decision over both of the two men's lives in your hands. Yet this is not only about two men's lives, it is about the honor and respect of the American nation.

Thayer: You're becoming pathetic, Mr. Thompson.

Thompson: I'm serious. For a full six years the lives of the two have hung between freedom and death.

Thayer: That's not my fault. The interminable filing of ever more objections, complaints, applications for retrial, of questionable items of evidence, postpones the final decision continually beyond the horizon.

Thompson: But what would happen if the defense omitted to make use of every last possibility that the law provides, at least to win time to avert a hideous fate?

Thayer: What would happen? Justice would have long ago run its course.

Thompson: The most terrible judicial murder of modern history would have been carried out.

Thayer: So, have you brought to us here today the witness who is supposed to tell us that, not Sacco and Vanzetti, but he himself was the murderer from South Braintree.

Thompson: He's waiting to be called.—First, on behalf of the entire defense team I submit to you our new application for retrial, which includes 63 notarized records. It is the result of the investigations initiated by ourselves after the rejection of all of the defense's appeals by the Supreme Court on May 12, 1926. I will briefly recapitulate the course of the proceedings since my colleague Fred H. Moore resigned from the defense and I, as I had been involved in the matter from the beginning, was named lead defender by the Defense Committee for Sacco and Vanzetti. That occurred in November 1924. On December 1st of the same year I filed an objection against the rejection of the retrial by you, Judge Thayer, on October 1, 1924. Thereafter, my efforts were directed at bringing an end to the torments to which the condemned Vanzetti was subject in Charlestown prison and in the insane asylum. On July 21, 1925 the formal complaint against all rights violations, 1454 pages in length, was presented to the Supreme Court. Not until January 1926 did this court enter into deliberations regarding this petition, which, as I said, lasted until May 12th and resulted in the rejection of all appeals. Meanwhile, a new state of affairs has arisen through the confession of the Portuguese Madeiros, whose statements have been confirmed by his accomplice Crost, who calls himself James F. Weeks, due to which I confidently expect the complete rehabilitation of my clients. All relevant written documents are included among the files I have presented to you. I request that the oral examination of the witness Madeiros be now conducted in my presence.

Thayer: The condemned Portuguese Celestino Madeiros shall now be brought forward.

Thompson: Just a word, man to man, Judge Thayer. Don't harden your heart out of political prejudice against the manifest voice of truth. In all the world's countries millions of frightened souls are listening for your judgment, not only workers, not

only those who share Sacco and Vanzetti's convictions—no, they are people to whom the idea of anarchism is as distant and hostile as it is to you and me, but for whom the obligations of their conscience have not grown numb from considerations of expediency. Comments of yours, comments of Prosecutor Katzmann have become known in Europe, which have severely damaged America's reputation as a land of civilization and morality. It has become known that the foreman of the jury which condemned Sacco and Vanzetti, Mr. Ripley, had said to a friend before the trial: "They must hang no matter what!"—It has been given into your hands to restore the honor of American justice. Listen to the murderer who will now speak to you, Judge, and don't be embarrassed by the judged.

Thayer: With all due respect, Attorney Thompson. I will reach the conclusion which the reasons of state demand.

Celestino Madeiros is lead forward in chains.

Thayer: You are Celestino Madeiros. At the start of this year you were condemned to death for a robbery-murder, and now you think that the electric chair can only kill once and so you take responsibility for the South Braintree crime—is that it?

Madeiras: That's not what I think. It is true that I was there on Pearl Street.

Thompson: It would be best if you would tell what happened, as you stated it for the record in Sacco's presence on May 20th.

Madeiras: When I was 19 years old, I encountered four Italians in Providence, two of them between 35 and 40 years old, the other two about 20 and 25. I later heard that they were the Morelli Gang. They persuaded me that I should take part in something that would bring in a lot of money. My lodgings were in Providence, 180 North Main Street. The Italians picked me up from there on April 15, 1920 at four o'clock in the morning in an open Hudson sedan. It was then exchanged in Randolph for a Buick.

Thompson: I bring to attention that according to the police findings the robbery was committed with a Buick.

Thayer: Keep going! Keep going!

Madeiras: First we drove to Boston, from there back to Providence and then to South Braintree, where I had never been before. We arrived there around mid-day. In Boston the others went into a pub, while I waited outside in the car. They said they wanted to inquire how much pay money had been sent to South Braintree that day. In Braintree we first went into a pub about two to three kilometers away from the shoe factory. Then we heard shooting and as we drove by in the car they threw us a package and jumped in.

Thompson: Sacco and Vanzetti were definitely not there?

Madeiras: No, they had absolutely nothing to do with it. Weeks claims the two who carried it out were Joe and Mike Morelli.

Thayer: We don't want to hear what others claim, but what you know.

Madeiras: But I described the people to Weeks and he had worked with them.

Thompson: The description fits the Morelli's exactly; Crost, alias Weeks, has stated that he has known Madeiros for six years. He was condemned to life in prison because of the robbery-murder committed together with Madeiros at the Wrentham bank. He explained that Madeiros had often spoken to him about the

South Braintree robbery-murder and that in any case it was the Morelli Gang from Providence. This agrees with the fact that the police in New Bredford, where the Morelli's had operated, suspected the gang immediately after the deed. But they dropped the matter after the arrest of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Thayer: So then, the police dropped their suspicion.

Thompson: It is certain that at that time Mike Morelli drove a Buick, which disappeared after April 15, 1920, and that Joe Morelli had a .32 Colt revolver. The bullet that killed Berardelli came from such a gun. The other five fatal bullets match in type and caliber the revolver that Mike Morelli carried.

Thayer: These are all just trivialities.

Thompson: One didn't think so in constructing the circumstantial evidence against Sacco and Vanzetti.

Thayer: Keep going! Keep going!

Madeiras: The \$15, 776 take was divided among us six participants. I received \$2,800, which I deposited in the bank. Shortly after the deed I was locked up for months because of a petty theft. After I was on the outside again, I withdrew the money and took a pleasure trip to the West and to Mexico.

Thayer: Good enough. We'll see this for ourselves in the files. But tell me: just where does your sudden urge to confess come from? You were able to keep quiet for so long thus far and have never given any indication that your conscience was such as to never leave you in peace until you have remorsefully confessed.

Madeiras: Oh, and I never would have made a confession, either. But I know about the death sentence against Sacco and Vanzetti and the stir it's caused. Then I recently saw Mrs. Sacco as she came to visit, holding the handsome boy by the hand and the little girl. I felt sorry for the kids—

C u r t a i n.

Scene 9

April 9, 1927.

Courtroom in Dedham.

Thayer and the other judges stand at the bench. In front of them the defense, to the side Sacco and Vanzetti under guard. The public, among them Rosa.

Thayer: The motion filed on June 17, 1926 for retrial of the case against the Italians Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti condemned to death on July 14, 1921 was dismissed by the Dedham court. The appeal by the defense against this decision was put before the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. The Supreme Court rejected the appeal for review of the trial on April 5, 1927. I thereby pronounce to you, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, the final verdict: You are condemned to suffer the sentence of death by the electric chair within the week which begins on Sunday, July 10th, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Seven. This is the verdict of the court. (*Sits down.*)

Rosa (*falls forward*): World opinion will judge you!

Thompson (*calming her leads her back to her seat*): We will not give up the fight.

Thayer: The condemned have the last word.

Sacco: I am no public speaker and I leave it to my friend, Vanzetti, to talk at length. I only wish to say this, that I don't know of anything in history more brutal than this court. I know that here two classes stand opposed and that between these two classes there will always be struggle. We belong to the people, but you persecute, tyrannize and kill the people. We tried to develop the people intellectually; you nourish hatred between the races. Only because I belong to the oppressed class do I stand here before you. You are the oppressor, Judge Thayer, you know this yourself. You know my whole life; you know why I stand here and why you condemn me to death. You have condemned my comrade Vanzetti twice, for Bridgewater and for South Braintree, and in doing so you know very well that he is innocent. (*To the gallery*): I thank you all, my comrades, who for seven years have stood up for me and Vanzetti. I declare once again: Judge Thayer knows that I am innocent, that I was never guilty, neither today nor ever.

Vanzetti: I declare that I am innocent of the crime in South Braintree and of the one in Bridgewater as well, for which I was sentenced to 15 years in prison. In my whole life I have never stolen, never killed, never spilled blood. Not only have I never stolen, never killed,—I have my whole life long, ever since I was first able to reason, fought for the extermination of crime from the earth. I have never strived for comfort and good position, for I feel that one person should not exploit another. I have certainly fought against those crimes which even the law and public morality condemn, but above all I have fought against the crimes which the law and the church sanctify: the exploitation and oppression of man by man. And if there be a reason why I am here condemned as guilty, then it is this and no other.

We have spent seven years in prison. No human tongue can describe what we have endured in these seven years. Yet I stand before you and do not tremble, I do not blush, I do not turn pale, I am neither ashamed nor afraid. With the evidence that has sufficed an American jury for our condemnation, Eugene Debs has said, one couldn't even find a dog guilty of having bitten chickens to death. In the whole world there is no more prejudiced, more callous judge than you, Judge Thayer. Outraged, people have reproached us for having been opposed to the war. It is our conviction that the war was a crime, and today, after ten years, we believe that even more strongly, for only now do we completely perceive the consequences and effects of the war. Here, at the foot of the gallows, I wish to call out to mankind: Everything that was promised you was a lie, illusion, deceit, crime. They promised you freedom,—do you see any signs of freedom? They promised you prosperity. Do you see any signs of prosperity?

Let me say one more thing: I don't wish on any dog what I must suffer for things in which I bear not the slightest guilt. I must suffer because I am a radical. But my justice is rooted deep inside me—and you could execute me twice over; if there were such a thing as resurrection I would live the same life over again that I have lived, do exactly the same again as I have done in life.

Thayer: The trial is finished. (*Exits with the other judges.*)

Rosa: Nicola—no, you will not have to die!

Sacco: Be brave, Rosa. We must bear what we cannot change. Our children should never have to be ashamed of their parents.

A Worker: Still three months time! We will fight!

Another: The storm of our protest must become a hurricane!

A Third: Don't lose courage, my friends!

Vanzetti: Our courage cannot be broken. If need be, then we will learn to die, as well. We haven't suffered in vain and we bear our cross without complaint. The time is coming when the fellow workers of the world will wage no more wars against one another. Then no more children will grow sick behind factory walls and be deprived of the sun and the green fields. The day is no longer far off when there will be bread for every mouth, a roof for every head and joy in every heart.

A Worker: We thank you, Sacco and Vanzetti. You are suffering for us—thus will we man the trenches for you.

Police Inspector: That's enough, leave the court room! (*Policemen push the workers toward the exit.*)

Rosa (*to Thompson*): Is there nothing left to do now?

Thompson: Governor Fuller must intercede.

Sacco: If the proletariat does not intercede—

A Woman (*calling from the exit*): Do you have no instructions for us, comrades? Can we fulfill any wish of yours?

Vanzetti: Gather money for my sister Luigia to travel to America. I would like to embrace her one more time.

Voices from the Workers: That we promise you, comrade Vanzetti.

Inspector: Forward! Forward!—Lead the prisoners away.

(The exiting Workers begin to sing the Internationale)

C u r t a i n.

Scene 10

June 29, 1927.

Office of Governor Fuller in Boston.

Governor Alvin Fuller. A Secretary.

Secretary (*with files*): Here are the further statements, protests, petitions, threatening letters and appeals of various kinds which were directed to President Coolidge, and which have been passed on to us by the White House.

Fuller: The matter of these two anarchists is beginning to assume somewhat grotesque proportions. I will soon suffocate under the paper that the people of the entire world have filled up in order to enlighten the highest official of the State of Massachusetts as to his duties.

Secretary: I must call some letters to your special attention, Governor Fuller. Here is the manifesto of a French writer Romain Rolland and here an appeal to the American people from one of his colleagues, a certain Anatole France. They are supposed to be respected representatives of their country.

Fuller: These people should concern themselves in their writing exercises with the scandals in their own country. Soon it'll be as if the government in Boston had no more pressing business than dealing with this over-blown legal trifle, as if in the whole world there was no more important task than saving two rascal enemies of the state, despisers of the law, anarchists, deserters and burdensome foreigners from the electric chair, who on top of everything else have been found guilty of grave robbery-murder.

(*Outcry below the window*): Out with Sacco and Vanzetti! Down with Judge Thayer!
Governor Fuller, act!

Secretary: Already another deputation.

Fuller: And naturally once again accompanied by the whole radical mob. Has the guard been reinforced?

Secretary: The building has been completely secured against every danger. It is out of the question that any demonstrators aside from their chosen speakers will be admitted into the building.

A Lackey: A delegation of the defense committee for Sacco and Vanzetti.

Fuller: Are any of the members of the delegation known to you?

Lackey: Attorney Thompson is with them and the wife of Sacco together with another foreigner, as well as Mr. Musmanno and three workers.

Fuller: Good, then, let them enter. (*Exit Lackey.*) One must give the beast sugar.

Enter Thompson, Musmanno, Rosa Sacco, Luigia Vanzetti, two Italian workers, an American worker.

Fuller (*approaches them as they enter, shakes Thompson's, Rosa's and Musmanno's hands*): I am happy to see you again and I admire your indefatigable and generous efforts on behalf of your protégés.

Rosa: We don't want to hear any flattery from you, Governor Fuller. The life and death of the condemned lay in your hand. You have the power to keep silent the terrible machine which in twelve days is to murder my husband and this woman's brother. I introduce to you Luigia Vanzetti.

Fuller (*gives Luigia his hand*): You have made a long voyage out of loving concern for your brother. Be assured that in me you have before you a man who doesn't lack human understanding for your feelings.

Luigia: And what hope can you offer me?

Fuller: I am deliberating on the matter, my good woman. If only my hands weren't so very bound by the laws of the United States—

An Italian Worker: Aha, you hide behind the laws.

Musmanno: Governor Fuller, it cannot have escaped your attention that the Sacco and Vanzetti affair has gotten the entire civilized world tremendously stirred up. Massive meetings and demonstrations are taking place in all the countries of Europe, in the large cities of the Orient and in Australia, as well. Not to mention the agitated mood of the working populace of Latin America. I think you must be buried under resolutions and protest telegrams.

Fuller: Indeed, Mr. Musmanno, the reports of the American ambassadors in all countries leave no doubt that the case strongly arouses public opinion abroad,—more than in the United States itself, as it seems.

Italian Worker: The immigrant workers in the States certainly don't take second place to their class-fellows abroad.

American Worker: It is true that through fascism the American proletariat has become somewhat dull and indifferent. But not entirely, Governor! The illusion of prosperity, with which the bourgeoisie knows through guarantee of a dubious luxury to temporarily disguise the misery of the proletariat, will one day be torn asunder and then the voices which your state wishes to silence will call the masses to revolution from the grave.

Fuller: Citizens! You may not threaten the guardians of the American Constitution!

Thompson: Governor Fuller, I too know the laws of the state well and obey them. But these laws have been violated a hundred fold in the case of Sacco and Vanzetti. I accuse Judge Thayer of having arrived at his decisions not according to the actual results of the investigation, but according to the insinuations of interested groups, which in politically charged cases are unfortunately able to influence the justice of the land, and according to his own hate-filled opinion against the anarchists.

Fuller: I can and may not take such insinuations for my own. The judge is to behave independently by force of his own convictions and is answerable only to his own conscience. I am not to take sides. I am an official and my actions are determined by the exigencies of the state's well-being, and by the authority of the state.

Rosa: Always the state! The individual matters nothing to you!

Fuller: I am not the court of final appeal. I must carry out whatever the court has seen to be just.

Thompson: Then I ask you, did Judge Thayer have the right to instruct the jury in their duties in the way that he did? He asked the jury to consider their office as would a true soldier who must follow the spirit of the highest American loyalty. Did it have to do here with the spirit of loyalty, or with whether or not Sacco and Vanzetti committed murder? Did Judge Thayer have the right, in order to determine if they were murderers, to question the defendants as to why they didn't love the country, why they were disappointed in its institutions, why they claimed that Harvard University is only attended by rich people? Did that serve to determine the truth, or to influence the jury?

Fuller: I have not been placed in this position in order to criticize this country's judges.

Luigia: But we criticize them, we from whom this country's judges steal their closest kin.

Musmanno: Look at the newspapers, Governor Fuller. Perhaps you can accuse the anarchist, the revolutionary labor newspapers of what we accuse Judge Thayer: that they judge according to political opportunity instead of according to the facts. But here you have the conservative *Boston Herald*, which for years had approved the guilty verdict. It writes that after the self-incrimination of Madeiros the innocence of the men has been proven and their execution would stain America's name with shame for all time. So speak thousands of bourgeois voices. Perhaps it is also useful for me to remind you of the economic losses which threaten the States if you do not put an end to this.

Fuller: What sort of economic losses?

Musmanno: In Sweden a branch of our committee to save Sacco and Vanzetti has formed. It sent the socialist attorney Branting to study the situation in person. He is on his way to Boston. The Swedish workers have determined, if necessary, to call upon the world proletariat to boycott American goods.

Fuller: I'm supposed to be able to prevent this? Everything comes back to me! I am here to govern the State of Massachusetts in accordance with the laws, without deference to the moods and passions of particular circles, and without yielding to the demands or threats from abroad.

Rosa: You don't want to do anything—that is all. You want, like Katzmann and Thayer, that the father of my children should die!

Fuller: You are being unfair to me, Mrs. Sacco. There is pressure on me from the other side, as well. Among these files are hundreds of letters calling on me to remain firm and to let things run their course.

Italian Worker: We can believe it, that the dollar despots are not idle!

Fuller: How should I do right by everyone? Whatever I do or arrange,—a part is always unsatisfied and lays the burden of all consequences on me. How did I get here?

Worker: Pontius Pilate! He washes his hands of any guilt.

Luigia: We want clarity! We want certainty! We're talking about human lives!

Fuller (*walks indecisively back and forth*): Good.—I'm not the monster you take me for. The execution will not take place on July 10th!

Luigia: Rosa!—Rosa, do you hear that: will not take place!

Rosa: Quiet! What will you do, Governor? Issue a pardon?!

Fuller: The execution will be postponed by one month, until August 10th.

Rosa (*bitterly*): Post—poned! Again just postponed! Again just prolonging the terrible game of cat and mouse!

(Noise in the street: Let Sacco and Vanzetti go!)

Musmanno: You hear, Governor Fuller. Our comrades who sent us to you are getting impatient. What does postponement mean?

Fuller: As you know, it is not in my power to reverse Judge Thayer's decision. All legal means have already been exhausted. Nonetheless, something more shall be done. I will form a committee of three impartial men who thus far have had nothing to do with the matter professionally. This committee shall review all the material, and if it comes to the conclusion that the verdict is contestable,—then, I guarantee, no injustice against Sacco and Vanzetti shall come to pass.

Luigia: Oh, Rosa—can you believe it?

Italian Worker: A new trick, a new ploy.

Musmanno: Who will comprise the committee? Will its meetings be open to the public?

Thompson: Will the archives of the Department of Justice be made available to the committee? Will it be apprised of the secret negotiations between Washington and Boston?

Fuller: Let me think about all these questions and reach a decision about them with the committee itself. Everything will be conscientiously considered and you may trust that America's great heart stands open to everyone in distress.

Rosa: Trust?—No, Governor Fuller. I have no more trust.—But I will nevertheless draw new hope in order to restore the strength I need in my fight for Sacco and Vanzetti.—Come, Luigia.

Musmanno: Don't disappoint the hope you have awoken.

Thompson: I thank you, Governor Fuller.

Italian Worker: We don't expect anything more from your justice. The workers will continue to fight.

Fuller: Farewell (*shakes the hands of Thompson, Musmanno and the women and follows them to the door. Roaring and yelling from the street.*)

Fuller (*to his secretary*): Inform immediately the former Judge Grand and professors Lowell and Pratton; I need to meet with them. I think these are reliable patriots who know what they owe the reasons of state.

C u r t a i n.

Scene 11

July 22, 1927.

Cell as in Scene 7. Sacco. Vanzetti.

Sacco: I'm dead miserable, Vanzetti.

Vanzetti: We've been eight days without food. When you hear of a hunger strike, you think slow death. For us it is the fast method, measured by the maddening torments of holding out.

Sacco: Just for this alone I would gladly have myself strapped into the murder chair at the first opportunity, to put a stop to this gruesome torture,—and then I think of Rosa and the children and I see before me how beautiful it all would be, in our little home, in my own little garden, the four of us together, happy and cheerful—and the longing becomes so great it turns into a wish and into a very quiet hope that it could some day come true.

Vanzetti: Hope—for me it's practically extinct.

Sacco: Yes, yes. But when the comrades come and report how everywhere people are working and fighting for us,—don't you think the power of the proletariat could succeed? But, even if it is not enough,—still they were never so united as in the prevention of this judicial murder.

Vanzetti: And that's what is beautiful about it: we are two average proletarians like them all, all these millions, and we haven't accomplished any more than the vast majority of them. We did our duty as common soldiers in the class war. Precisely for that reason they feel that whatever is done to us happens to them all. The bourgeoisie tore us indiscriminately out of the great army of the world proletariat; the lot simply fell to us that the reaction should try out its power over the workers of all countries.

Sacco: And yet many bourgeois everywhere have taken up our cause. Fuller receives countless demands to release us, even from European authorities and parliaments.

Vanzetti: It is totally pointless. Do you know what reasons of state are? Reasons of state are self-righteousness for the sake of the illusion of an idea.

Sacco: What do you mean "illusion"?

Vanzetti: Because the state doesn't rest upon an idea at all. It must only present the pretense of one. The state is only the sober, bloodless machinery that guarantees

the functioning of capitalist exploitation, nothing more. Its institutions, military, justice, police, even the schools and the church are only aids to this single function of the state. But it is dressed in the glimmer of a moral principle, so that its claim to authority might appear hallowed before the uncritical masses.

(Pause.)

Sacco: I have received such a dear, touching letter from my little Inès. At seven years old she can barely trace out the letters, the sweet creature, who has never seen her father except behind bars.

Vanzetti: When I saw Luigia again and she gave me my father's greeting, my own childhood came alive to me again—and then my whole life that has tossed me about until I landed here. I began to write down the story of my life, everything exactly as it was. This I wish to leave behind to my class fellows, the fate of a proletarian, with all its great troubles and little joys. You will read it, Nicola, once I've written out a fair copy. Hopefully the collection won't leave me when I get to the last section—this year of torment and inhuman suffering.

Sacco: Another must then append the conclusion: judicial murder or enfeeblement through hunger strike.

(Pause.)

Vanzetti: Strange. I think more often about the Bridgewater trial than about the murder hearing against the two of us. There was not the slightest glimmer of humanity in the voice of Judge Webster Thayer. I didn't understand at all why he hated me so much. I must have appeared to him as a strange sort of animal—such a common worker, as well as a foreigner and anarchist to boot. He looked down his nose and mocked all my witnesses, all simple proletarians, who only spoke the truth. They were just foreigners, you know. If men bear witness, you can believe them—but foreigners, they aren't human—ugh!

(Pause.)

Damn this emptiness in my stomach. It's like my guts have been scorched. (*Bangs on the door*): Hey, hello! Call your Thayer here, your Katzmann, your Fuller! They've got to put an end to the nastiness! (*Screams out*): I've had enough!

Sacco: It's pointless, Vanzetti!

Vanzetti: I know, but it makes it more bearable.

(*Rattling at the door.*)

Guard: Quiet there! What an outrage! I suppose you want to be thrown into the cell with the rubber walls! Well, today you've got company. In here!

Madeiras (*appears in the door*): They brought me to you. We're to receive a visit.

Sacco: A visit—for us three together?

Madeiras: I don't know anything either. But I saw a state vehicle drive up. Some high gentleman. He had himself brought to the warden.

Sacco: Thayer after all?

Vanzetti: I'd beat and kick him right out the door.

Sacco: And if he brings good news?

Vanzetti: No illusions, Sacco! What good could come from him? That sort never has any good for us—at most new lies.

Madeiras: Do you mean that a pardon can come for me, too?

Vanzetti: For you maybe sooner than for us. Had you been less of a criminal and more of a revolutionary you would be worse off.

Madeiros: Here on the inside I have also thought about some things. But you must despise me. I really am a robber and a murderer.

Sacco (*gives him his hand*): We don't despise you. Here in prison we are all comrades, and the rich are worse robbers and murderers than you. In the war they turned the whole population into murderers.

Vanzetti: We have much to thank you for, Madeiros. Without your confession many people would still have their doubts about us.

Madeiros: Perhaps you would have already been executed a year ago.

Vanzetti (*laughs*): If that is all that you have prevented, then at most we could only praise your good intention. The last year has hardly been a great favor to us.

Sacco: Now we will likely have to transfer over to Charlestown into the death cell.

Madeiros: Me, too, probably. It's all the same to me. Whether they do me in or let me rot my life away in a hole like this, there's no big difference.

(Pause.)

Vanzetti: My head hurts. My brain is totally empty.

Sacco: I feel it in the knees.

Madeiros: You both look pale. May I not offer you my bread?

Sacco: Thank you, dear friend. We are not eating.

Madeiros: You are on hunger strike—long time already?

Sacco: A good week. We're protesting against the eternal reprieves and want a final answer.

Vanzetti: The investigating committee with the three gentlemen Governor Fuller appointed is the latest trick to throw sand in the eyes of the proletariat. He should reveal the fraud that lies behind it. That's why we're going hungry.

Madeiros: Do you believe it's a fraud? I thought, if they pardon you, they'll let me maybe slip by with you.

Sacco: Of course, you're dependent on the mercy of these people. We don't want any mercy, we want justice!

Vanzetti: Only, they won't want to admit that we've been condemned for a crime that we didn't commit.

Enter the Warden with Governor Fuller. Several Guards.

Warden: Here are the three condemned men.

Fuller: Which is Madeiros?

Madeiros: Here.

Fuller: Good, good, my dear man. I have just received your appeal for clemency. You will soon have a definite answer. Don't lose heart.

Vanzetti: And who are you, if I might ask?

Fuller: I am the Governor of Massachusetts, Alvin Fuller. You are Vanzetti, as I recall from pictures—and you, then, are Sacco. I hear that you are refusing to take food.

Sacco: As long as our fate remains uncertain.

Fuller: I have not come here as your enemy.

Vanzetti: You come as a representative of the state. You wouldn't be a friend of ours, then.

Fuller: You are mistaken. I certainly hope that you will let me persuade you to replenish your strength with a delicious lunch. I have arranged for them first to bring you a glass of milk with sweet bread. Then an hour later you'll receive a nice piece of meat and some wine.

Vanzetti: That smells like a last meal.

Fuller: Absolutely not. Perhaps I can even give you hope.

Vanzetti: Our hunger strike will likely arouse some commentary on the outside and that is unpleasant for you. This explains to me the honor of your visit.

Fuller: But you shouldn't be so suspicious.

Sacco: We have been disappointed too often to keep on believing. Can you make us any promises?

Fuller: Not quite that. You yourselves know what a vast amount of material has been collected in the course of these many years. If the investigating committee is to reach a conclusion that could potentially change the date of the execution set for August 10th, then you will admit that it must weigh all the pros and cons against one another with utmost precision. That takes time. In the end, you yourselves should not have to deny that right and truth have held sway in their decision.

Sacco: We would have liked for one of our defense attorneys to have been present for this conversation.

Fuller: In that case I believe the chat would have taken on an almost formal, legalistic character. I had wished to avoid that so you could clearly see that one could be Governor of the State and yet at the same time a man with a feeling heart.

Vanzetti: Fine, Governor, then let us have our milk and sweet bread now. Are you in agreement, Sacco, to end the hunger strike now?

Sacco: I am not yet at all convinced that anything will change for us.

Vanzetti: Me neither, you can count on that. But after these friendly words we don't want to appear so stubborn that the Governor feels compelled to reseal his open heart.

Sacco: Well, fine by me, then.

Warden (*to Guard*): Have milk and sweet bread brought here.

Fuller: For Madeiros, too.

Madeiros: I thank you, Mister.

(A Guard arrives immediately with milk and sweet bread.)

Vanzetti (*takes a sip*): You expect, Governor, that we will content ourselves with your kind heartedness and a word of consolation. For a full six years we've been fed on promises, but until now every hope has been devoured as fast as this meal will be which refreshes us this minute after eight days of fasting. Our mistrust has not been diminished by your words.

Fuller: But it is unjustified.

Sacco: Just a few days ago, despite great efforts on behalf of the condemned, you allowed the execution of three young people for robbery and murder to proceed.

Fuller: They were true convicted criminals. That doesn't set any precedent.

Vanzetti: Well good, since you are beating on your sensitive heart, I will then assume you would have a heart that is accessible to the suffering of others.

Fuller: That I have, I really do.

Vanzetti: Then I ask you to gather your power of imagination and place yourself in the position of those who you see before you. I am not now talking of Madeiros. Yes, he too is a man with human feeling and with human passions. These passions led him astray, and he himself hardly imagines how much less his fault that is than the fault of the social relationships and institutions of capitalist society. If you have mercy on him, then that would bring only honor to your human heart. But things are different with us, who don't appeal to your mercy but turn rather to your sense of justice and demand the reversal of an unjust verdict. Likely you doubt that the verdict was unjust. Just assume so hypothetically, just so long as you are here with us. Can you do that?

Fuller: Certainly. Please say what's on your mind.

Vanzetti: Then imagine now the seven years that we've had to spend between the prison walls, under false charge of having killed men for the sake of vile profit. Imagine vegetating in prison for six years, innocent, with a court-imposed death sentence, day by day, night by night, hour by hour awaiting the announcement that the sentence will now be carried out. As the day draws near, you ask yourself: will you live to see the night? And when night comes, you ask: will you lay yourself to bed again tomorrow? Six years—let that time come alive for you, Governor. Think back and recall everything you've done in those six years, everything you've desired, accomplished, experienced, planned. We haven't experienced in those six years anything else but cold vengeance for a crime to which we have no connection. We've been tortured, thrown into psychiatric cells, interrogated and interrogated again; our torments have been intensified with every means of cruel ingenuity and have been shown satisfaction and mockery when we've betrayed that we were suffering. But of all torments the worst is that of waiting, of being stalled, of the eternal exchange between hoping and being swindled. It is as if we were being forced to watch, year in, year out, day in, day out, as the electric chair was charged up for us and then discharged, and when we thought, now all's calm, then the engineer comes right back and fills the batteries, and the buzzing and rattling of the hellish device begins again. Thus, whether we are awake or asleep, whether we are eating or talking with one another, whether we are reading or writing or thinking of our loved ones, we have only one longing: that finally there should be an end to all this—one way or the other. Let us breathe again, Governor Fuller, or let us choke off our breath once and for all. Only—make an end to it!

Fuller: I thank you for these words. They have moved me deeply.

Sacco: Vanzetti has said to you what I feel as well. Take his words to heart, but if you can really empathize, then think too of the sufferings of those who are connected to us. I love my wife and I love my poor children, who are growing up and don't know whether they still have a father. They would be happier to know their father was in his grave than restlessly interred between life and death, between the executioner's chair and freedom.

Fuller: I will not forget your urgent exhortation, my friends, I will do for you what is in my power.—And you, Madeiros, do you have anything else to say to me?

Madeiros: No, Mister, help Sacco and Vanzetti!

Fuller: Now, I think, you will be a little happier than before. I am glad that you wish to take food again. Thus you will quickly regain the strength that you will hopefully use again in life. You are true men and I beg you not to deny me a handshake in parting. (*He shakes Sacco's and Vanzetti's hands.*) Farewell, and have faith!
(*He waves to Madeiros*): Good luck, Madeiros!
(*Exits with the Warden.*)

Sacco: What do you think?—Does he really mean it?

Vanzetti: I don't know. If he was putting on an act, then he is the craziest scoundrel ever to see the sun.

C u r t a i n .

Scene 12

August 9, 1927.

An open space in Boston. Late evening. A crowd.

Cries: Down with Fuller! Death to the executioners! Long live the revolution! Freedom for Sacco and Vanzetti! Down with the traitor Coolidge! Revenge! Revenge on Thayer! Death to Fuller and Thayer! To the prison! Save Sacco and Vanzetti!

A Worker: Quiet, comrades! (*swinging a special newspaper edition.*)

Many: Quiet! New information!

1st Worker: The syndicalist unions have declared the general strike in Buenos Aires and Rosario!

Cries: Bravo! Long live the general strike!

1st Worker: In Mexico the demonstrations are taking on a turbulent character. The excitement of the masses is indescribable.—In Paris, London, Brussels, Berlin, Hamburg, Stockholm, Oslo, Copenhagen the syndicalists, communists and anarchists are demonstrating together for Sacco and Vanzetti!

Cries: Long live proletarian solidarity!

1st Worker: In many capitals the American ambassadors feel threatened and are demanding police protection.

Cries: Bravo! Down with the reaction! Down with dollar justice!

2nd Worker: Comrades! Listen to me!

Many: Quiet! Let him speak!

2nd Worker: We are cheering the demonstrations of the international proletariat instead of acting ourselves. It will soon be 11 o'clock. In just one and a half hours the death sentence is to be carried out.

Many: No! Save Sacco and Vanzetti!

Voices: What should we do?

3rd Worker: Storm the prison! Bring them out! (*Great applause.*)

4th Worker: We wouldn't make it. The road to Charlestown is blocked. Armed men are everywhere.

A Woman: To the governor! (*Approval.*)

2nd Worker: He's not there. He's skipped off to his country estate. There's a little island and the paths to it are beset by the military.

Many: Boo! The coward! Down with Fuller!

2nd Worker: Coolidge, too, and many senators have also retreated to the country and have their own guards.

Calls: Scoundrels! Cowardly murderers! Death to Coolidge and Fuller!

Rosa and Luigia run back in tears.

Rosa: Comrades! We've said goodbye. We come from the death cell.

Voices: Silence! Sacco's wife, Vanzetti's sister! Speak, comrade.

Rosa: We weren't allowed to stay any longer.

4th Worker: Is there no more hope?

Luigia: Warden Hendry said, until he has received no telephone call from Fuller, he won't do anything. He thinks there could still be a counter order.

3rd Worker: Don't believe the scoundrel. They're all murderers!

Many: Down with Fuller! Down with Thayer!

Woman: As long as Sacco and Vanzetti are still breathing, we must have hope.

Rosa: Yes, comrades. I don't want to lose hope yet. You don't know what a night I've passed with my children. They gave us courage again. On July 22nd Fuller himself was with them in the cell—they were on hunger strike. He spoke to them, he promised he wanted to support them and he managed to get them to abandon their hunger strike. In parting he shook both their hands.

Voices: Revenge on the hypocrite!

Rosa: They didn't want to admit that they had come to trust him again. But we read it in their eyes. And then one piece of bad news after the other. On August 3rd the same Fuller confirmed the death sentence!

Many: Boo! Down with the Governor!

Rosa: Three days after that came the report of the three man committee: Guilty!

1st Worker: They conferred in secret behind closed doors. A fraudulent deceit!

4th Worker: Fuller only wanted to have a cover for himself and Thayer. They sought out the three rogues themselves.

2nd Worker: Comrades, how long do we want to scream here? The reaction in Charlestown is on the move!

Luigia: Friends, brothers, do what you can!

5th Worker: Quiet! An important development!

Many: Silence! Quiet! What's happened, comrade?

5th Worker: A bomb has gone off in the New York subway. Great devastation. Several dead, several wounded. Enormous excitement in the city.

Many: Bravo! Right on! Death to the reaction!

A Voice: The work of undercover agents!

1st Worker: There's no way to know.

2nd Worker: Comrades, let's make one more try!

Many: Yes, yes—try what?

2nd Worker: Let's send more deputations, one in a car to Fuller, a second directly to Charlestown.

Many: Yes, right! Form two deputations! Who should lead them?

A Woman: Rosa Sacco the one, and Luigia Vanzetti the other!

Many: Bravo, comrade.—Hurry, comrade Rosa! Comrade Luigia! Each with five workers.

Voice: Make way! Quiet! Make way for comrade Musmanno!

Many: Quiet! Make way, there! The chairman of the defense committee, comrade Musmanno!

Musmanno (*waving a paper*): Postponed! Governor Fuller granted a postponement!

Luigia: Postponement! Rosa—just listen! A postponement!

Rosa: Hold me, comrade,—I can't go on. (*They catch her fall and support her.*)

Voices: Read it out loud, comrade Musmanno!

Musmanno: Fuller's announcement reads: "The courts of the republic are busily engaged in reviewing the formal complaints and petitions filed by the jurists and in reaching conclusions. The courts themselves do not have the power to grant a postponement. However, in order to allow them the opportunity to review the charges against Sacco and Vanzetti, and in order that they can thereby base their conclusions on their recent deliberations, I have recommended to the executive council to delay the execution of the sentences against Sacco, Vanzetti and Madeiros by twelve days to August 22nd. The council's decision was unanimous. Before this decision was reached, the district attorney's office had made the same proposal."

Comrades! Friends! I was with the comrades in the death cell and gave them the news. They had no strength left to rejoice.

A Woman: The poor men!

Musmanno: Their heads had already been shaved, so that the metal ring of the electric chair could work more effectively.

Luigia: Hideous!—Bartolomeo!

Musmanno: They were supposed to die in 40 minutes.

Cries: Down with Thayer! Down with dollar justice!

Musmanno: They had made their peace with everything.

Rosa: Oh, not for the first time.

Musmanno: Now it's time for us to get back to work! We have won 12 days. That is a short time, but good will and revolutionary power can accomplish much!

2nd Worker: What's going to happen now, comrade Musmanno?

Musmanno: Sacco and Vanzetti will be brought tonight already from the death cell back to the prison.

3rd Worker: To new mortal agonies!

Musmanno: The Supreme Court must once more review the appeals for a retrial.

Rosa: The same old circle.

3rd Worker: The scoundrels are hiding themselves all under the same blanket.

Musmanno: You must keep on demonstrating! Every day in the street!

4th Worker: That we will. And when the Supreme Court again says no?

Musmanno: Then there's still recourse to the High Court in New York and an appeal to President Coolidge.

3rd Worker: He's already made himself scarce.

Musmanno: The appeal to the High Court is only admissible if the Supreme Court of Massachusetts fails, and then only if we can also obtain the signature of a member of the Federal Court. If its chairman Holmes does not give his signature, then Attorney Thompson will ask the previous president, Chief Justice Taft. Above

all, we must get the Justice Department to make its files public. Then it would be proven that the authorities have illegally conspired among themselves.

2nd Worker: That we already know. But none of them will cast blame on the other.

4th Worker: For all of them the reasons of state supercede justice.

1st Worker: Quiet, comrades! Another announcement!

Many: Quiet! Quiet!

1st Worker: In San Francisco this evening there has been an explosion in a church.

2nd Worker: That is the voice of the offended proletariat.

Musmanno: Comrades! We must naturally make use of all legal means. However, this is not about bourgeois justice, not about the application of paragraphs and legalist formulas. We stand in the most severe battle of the class war. International capital has provoked the international proletariat. Comrades Sacco and Vanzetti, our friends, are in the front lines of this battle. If any thing will be able to save them, it will surely be only the active solidarity of their fellow workers. Proletarians, forward! Long live the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat!

Song: Brothers, toward the sun to freedom!—

C u r t a i n.

Scene 13

August 22, 1927, evening.

A room at the country estate of Governor Fuller.

Fuller, Thayer, Katzmann, Judges, Officials.

Fuller: Gentlemen, I have asked you in the final hour to my country house in order to now determine the irreversible conclusion to this tiresome and prolonged affair of the two Italian anarchists. This suspension of the execution until tonight, extracted from me on August 9th under threat, I should say, of physical force, with conspiracies, threats, sudden announcements of assassinations and acts of revenge, must in my opinion (which is shared by all authorities consulted) finally have been the last of the delays. We must show no further weakness. The grace period is expired, and (unless you have changed your views) justice will receive satisfaction immediately after midnight.

Thayer (*looks at the clock*): Then the bandits still have four hours to snooze.

Fuller: I give you now a brief report on the course of events over the last few days, after which I will then ask you for your formal consent to the execution.

Katzmann: I don't suppose we have reason to fear an attack on our meeting by the radicals?

Fuller: You need not worry, Prosecutor Katzmann. The estate's position on an island would make an attack very difficult, regardless. But on guard in the house, in the park and on the access road on the main land there are 900 soldiers, including six companies of infantry and two machine gun units. The delegations that have been arriving each of these last few days from Boston and from everywhere, and which for well considered reasons I cannot turn away, are of course thoroughly searched

for weapons before they even board the motorboat to cross over. Nothing can happen.

Thayer: I wouldn't put anything past this whipped-up rabble. After the bombings in New York and San Francisco, now the explosions in Buenos Aires: the revolutionary riffraff hang together like barnacles about the whole world.

Fuller: The general strikes in multiple places, and especially in South America, then the mass demonstrations in Europe's big cities, the largest experienced thus far, as the diplomatic representatives report, must reinforce our view that the Sacco and Vanzetti case has grown into a question of prestige for the authority of the American state.

Katzmann: Any further withdrawal would be interpreted as cowardice.—Yet, one further question, Governor Fuller: are the precautions also in Boston itself, above all in the vicinity of the courthouse and the state prison in Charlestown, sufficient and suited to all eventualities?

Fuller: A state of siege has been declared in the eastern states of North America. All the available resources of the military and the police are on high alert. The government buildings are being guarded by special military formations with the heaviest arms. Tanks have been procured, barricades have been installed in front of the prison, and the police have been armed with gas bombs. Detectives and vigilantes are operating everywhere in the hundreds and the slightest unruliness will be suppressed by arrests and harsher procedures if necessary.

Thayer: Very good, very necessary. To think, the radicals in Geneva did not shy from smashing the famous glass court of the Palace of Nations!

A Judge: The holy site of world peace!

Katzmann: In Paris and Hamburg it has come to regular street battles between the rabble and the police. In all European ports the workers are refusing to unload our ships. In Norway the general strike has been called. How's that for an internationally organized uprising!

Thayer: All that for two useless Italian war resisters! Just no more hesitation.

An Official: No, we must show vigor.

Fuller: I see with satisfaction that your attitude is in line with my opinion. Now I ask for your attention: After the decision of the three-man committee, the defense called on the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. Its vote was issued on August 19th; the Supreme Court, as was to be expected, refused to address the jury's guilty verdict at all. It did not believe it necessary to acknowledge the defense's alleged proofs of Judge Thayer's prejudice.

Thayer: A shameless bunch, these lawyers!

Fuller: Whereupon the defense attempted to direct an appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States in order to cancel the now finally established date of execution. The attempt failed, however. Such a document must, as you know, bear the signature of a member of the Supreme Court itself. The chairman Holmes refused to give his signature. It was possible to inform Chief Justice Taft in time that they were seeking to soften him up to this end. He quickly went on vacation and is now in Canada (*lively applause*). The anarchists' friends equally failed to reach Senator Borah or any other relevant member of the Federal Court. By later delivering the missing files to the office of the Federal Court, the defense

admittedly succeeded in fulfilling the condition imposed to hinder their action, yet it proved possible to thwart their plans from another angle. For it was conceivable that after the submission of the petition a federal judge could have been moved, by pity or some other reason, to give his signature later. The prescribed format of such a petition requires the inclusion of all the trial documents. These documents are at the Department of Justice, and so this office needed only to resist releasing them,—

Katzmann: —which is naturally what happened!

Fuller: —and the court officials had the formal justification not to forward the appeal, since it did not meet the prescribed format. Thus by attention to all relevant factors did they lose their last chance of success by legal means, and there remains only the possibility of an act of clemency by myself or by President Coolidge. It is known that in order to escape the unpleasantness of the matter entirely the President has already recently traveled to the country, where he does not want to be bothered with any business matters whatsoever. I for my part however do not wish to interfere with the right of pardon of the President of the United States, especially as the severity of the crime and the unsympathetic personalities of the condemned hardly seem to justify excessive leniency in this case. Attorney Thompson now insists upon the granting of a renewed extension, in which period he will—

Thayer: How many times now? Under no circumstances!

Fuller: I already said I was no longer inclined to drag the case out any further. The world-wide tumult caused by this case, the newspaper frenzy in favor of the condemned, the entirely inappropriate meddling of Europe in America's internal affairs, in which unfortunately even governmental authorities are taking part, sets America the commanding task of cutting the Gordian knot with a decisive blow. This country has a history in which the virtues of liberty, justice and humanity shine inextinguishable. The screaming of empty phrases and denunciations by the shadowy enemies of order is able to diminish none of this. But presently this country stands in a situation in which it must uphold its reputation against a vile agitation on the part of destructive elements. It must not occur that America makes the slightest retreat before decrees from abroad. Even an act of mercy, even commuting the death penalty to life in prison, would be construed as a retreat and moreover would bear with it the danger that the fight for the release of Sacco and Vanzetti would rage loudly on to the detriment of the reasons of state, just as we have in fact experienced in the case of the anarchist bomb throwers Mooney and Billings. Should the carrying out of the sentence at first bring the public outrage to a boil,—once the murderers are dead, then the concrete object of propaganda against our institutions of justice will have been removed and the safety of legal life, the ordered structure of our state, will have attained a victory over the seething element of the lower social strata, which for a long time will cut the desire of the revolutionary agitators at home and abroad to challenge America's state consciousness. I therefore request that you empower me to reject all further petitions and complaints. The defense will be here at ten o'clock in order to receive the final response to their latest objection. Commission me to

declare to them the finality of the decision and assign me to have the sentence carried out at the appointed hour.

Katzmann: I believe I may declare that we have taken note of Governor Fuller's explanations without dissent, that his arguments allow no room for objection, and that we assent with satisfaction to his intention to resolve this issue before the day is over.

Thayer: No one can accuse you, Governor, no one can accuse us judges or prosecutors of not having done everything to help assure the victory of justice. For the execution of the two pests we can bear responsibility with a light heart, especially as it is born by all higher authorities.

Fuller: I thank you, gentlemen. Tomorrow there will be no more case of Sacco and Vanzetti. (*All exit except for Fuller and his Secretary.*)

Fuller: Is there anything left to attend to?

Secretary: Sacco's wife and Vanzetti's sister are waiting outside.

Fuller: Still more women's crying!—Thank God all that is now at an end. Let them in, then.

Rosa and Luigia enter.

Fuller: (*approaches them, gives them his hand*): Poor ladies, how I pity you!

Rosa: Help, Governor, you can!

Fuller: I have tried my utmost to avert misfortune. Unfortunately, it was all in vain.

Luigia: Can you then offer no more hope?

Fuller: We state officials are not as all-powerful as you imagine. Our behavior is prescribed by harsh and grievous obligations.

Rosa: Until now we have demanded justice, now we come only to beg for mercy.

Luigia: We beseech you—pardon my unfortunate brother and poor Sacco!

Fuller: It is difficult, more than difficult, to be unable to console you. My duty is prescribed by law. I have no way around it,—as much as I wish there were.

Rosa: But, there is—if only you truly wish it, there is too. I know it.

Luigia (*falls down in front of him*): Governor Fuller! I have never humbled myself before anyone, never begged from anyone. I do it—for two innocents who are to die! Have pity! Have compassion! Mercy! Mercy!

Fuller: For God's sake, stand up, good woman! You are bringing tears to my eyes. If only I could help,—how gladly I would do it.

Rosa: You yourself are a father. You have children just like Nicola Sacco! Feel for a moment as a father feels. Imagine your children in our children's situation. Please, Governor, please, act as a good father would act. That is better than blindly following the stone letter of the law. For the sake of the children—please!

Fuller: Poor woman, dear poor woman. Your pain rends my heart—go, go! I cannot help! (*He runs into the adjoining room.*)

Rosa: Nothing—nothing. Luigia, quick, come, so we might still see them!

C u r t a i n.

Scene 14

August 22/23, 1927, night.

Death row cell in Charlestown. The back of the stage is closed-off by a second curtain.
Vanzetti is writing. Sacco is reading.

Vanzetti: What are you reading, Sacco?

Sacco: Lincoln's letters. There was a different spirit in America in those days.

Vanzetti: The citizenry still lived with revolutionary memories and therefore had ideals.

Sacco: And you, Vanzetti,—what are you writing?

Vanzetti: A letter to my father. Luigia stirred up great homesickness.

Sacco: It was a strange day today. Did you think this morning that we would still be alive in the evening?

Vanzetti: I haven't thought that almost every morning for years now.

Sacco: Still—I had hoped today would be the real thing, now Fuller is letting this August 22nd pass us by once again.

Vanzetti: He can do what he wants. To go through one more time what we did 12 days ago, armed on the inside, in heart and mind prepared, having taken a final account, — and then, with shaven head, forty minutes before the procedure, to be placed in waiting once again, — no, I'm not doing that again. For me, this August 22nd has gone by like every other day of the last six years.

Sacco: Me, too, really, — only, when Rosa was here this afternoon with the children, and I had to think when they were leaving—never again! I have to admit, as I took the little girl into my arms, I cried then for the first time in long while.

Vanzetti: Don't be ashamed, friend. I wish I still had any tears left.

Sacco: It must be too late already, Vanzetti. They're leaving the lights on a long time today.

Vanzetti: Yeah, strange. So much the better. This way we can occupy ourselves a little longer.

(Vanzetti keeps writing; Sacco reads.)

(Steps are heard.) Thompson and Musmanno are let in.

Sacco: Who's that! Now, so late at night! —

(Silence.)

Vanzetti: Ah—I understand.

Thompson: We have the painful task of informing you that you must die at 12 o'clock.

Sacco: The end.—Finally!

Musmanno: Comrades, we've tried everything—everything *(throws his hands before his face)*.

Vanzetti: We know what you have done for us.

Sacco: It's enough for us that you know we are innocent.

Thompson: We're convinced of that. Otherwise we would have given up the fight long ago.

Musmanno: All the electric chairs and gallows in the world won't reverse the world's conviction that a terrible murder is being committed against you.

Vanzetti: How did you find out, attorney?

Thompson: I was summoned this evening to the Governor's estate with McAnarney around 10 o'clock, and I came here directly from there by car.

Sacco: And you, Musmanno?

Musmanno: I wasn't admitted any more to see Fuller. I had to wait in the hall, my every movement under the suspicion of ten eyes. The Defense Committee is no longer recognized.

Vanzetti: Will you disband?

Musmanno: How can you think so? You will never be dead to us—and the struggle on your behalf continues, — now more than ever!

Vanzetti: Maybe in death we will continue to be of use to the proletariat.

Sacco: The thought makes death easy. —But, friend Thompson, tell us about Fuller. Did he play as innocent with you as he did with us?

Thompson: Oh, no. He explained coldly and bitingly that he had decided that you and Madeiros will be executed. Then he showed us a letter from the Attorney General, who had advised him to allow no further delays. And this evening he had also received all the officials, judges and prosecutors, and the decision was approved by them unanimously.

Vanzetti: Governor Fuller is a murderer, just like Thayer and Katzmann, the bought-off witnesses and everyone who had a part in this crime.

Sacco: The news that it's all over can't surprise us anymore. Capitalism is harsh and pitiless toward true soldiers of revolution. Tell the comrades, Musmanno, that we are proud to die thus and to fall as is fitting for anarchists.

Musmanno: I am not able to respond now,—forgive me. I will give the comrades your greetings and best wishes. And don't worry about your children. They will want for nothing. (*He turns away.*)

Sacco: Thank you, friend.

Thompson: Have you said goodbye to your family?

Vanzetti: I suppose it was goodbye, but we still said "until next time!"
(*The guard opens the door.*)

Guard: The two women are here. Should they wait?

Thompson: No—we're going. Farewell, be strong. We know that you die innocent.

Vanzetti: Thank you for all your efforts and concern for us—farewell.

Sacco: You were our guardian angels during the trials, thanks and best wishes to you.
(*Thompson exits quickly.*)
(*Musmanno hugs both.*)

Sacco: Farewell, Musmanno!

Vanzetti: Tell the comrades we die gladly if it serves the cause. Farewell.
(*Exit Musmanno.*)

Rosa and Luigia are admitted.

(*Rosa hugs Sacco, Luigia hugs Vanzetti: a long silence.*)

Vanzetti: Well, good Luigia, it's come to this.

Luigia (*tries to say something, sobs*).

Vanzetti (*breaks down in tears*): You see, Sacco—now I'm crying, too.

Sacco: Rosa, my beloved. Be brave for the children.

Rosa: Nicola, you won't see me weak at this hour. Just as I love you, so I hate your murderers.

Sacco: It's good that you didn't bring the children here one more time. It would have been too difficult.

Rosa: We were at Governor Fuller's and came from there on the street car.

Vanzetti: You were just at Fuller's?

Luigia: We begged for you. He seemed deeply moved—but it was all in vain.

Vanzetti: Moved! Already swinging the axe the murderers still play at tenderness!

Sacco: Let's not argue with our enemies now, Vanzetti. Let the last few minutes be totally for our loved ones.

Vanzetti: Come here, Luigia. We'll let Nicola and Rosa talk without witnesses.

Sacco: Kiss our sweet little Inès, Rosa, and tell our son this from his father; he should keep it as my last testament. Dante is now 14 years old, so he must be strong and know how to console his mother. When you are feeling depressed, he should take you out into the country, as I would have; he should pick flowers with you, rest under the shade of the trees and find joy and tranquility in nature. Above all, impress upon him that he must never be set on his own good fortune alone, but must stand by the weak and helpless and aid the persecuted. Only the poor are his true friends, only the comrades who are ready to fight and fall, like his father and Bartolomeo have fallen in the fight for the happiness and freedom of the proletariat. Were he not so young, I would have wished for him to witness the execution of his father for himself. It would be a terrible memory, but he could have used it in the morning to reproach the world with the shame of the century that reveals itself in the atrocity of our unjust death. Later, Dante will understand that this is a battle between rich and poor, between law and freedom. I tell him this from the house of death. May he help turn this house to rubble with the hammers of socialism and anarchy and bring it about that workshops of free labor and schools of truth for orphans and minors be erected where prisons and places of execution once stood.

Rosa: I will carry out everything that you have entrusted to me and I will remain a good mother to your children and raise them in your spirit, Nicola.

Vanzetti: Greet father, Luigia, greet your children, Rosa. Thank our comrades for everything that they've done for us. That we must die detracts nothing from the strength of our gratitude. But the workers must stand together and, come what may, be of one heart and one soul. We are only two who are being torn from their midst. But our ideas, the revolutionary ideas of the world-proletariat, will live on in millions of minds. They can not be defeated and not be destroyed. May our pain, our sorrows and also our errors and defeats, the whole story of our passion, become weapons for future battles and for the liberation of humanity. Say to all the comrades of work and struggle a final farewell from us with a sorrowful, yet love-filled heart. Tell them that we request just one thing in this dark hour: unity! Greet them and let them have courage. We remain theirs in life as in death!

Sacco: Go now. You shouldn't be here when they lead us away.

(Long embrace. Both women exit.)

Sacco and Vanzetti *(approach each other and shake hands)*.

Guard *(enters)*: The warden inquires whether there's any wish of yours we can fulfill.

Vanzetti: Thank you, we don't need anything.

Guard *(stands in place)*: I—all of us—wish to make it easier for you.

Sacco: We know; you are a good man.

Guard: My colleagues want to come in here, say goodbye.

Vanzetti: Let them in.

(Three more guards enter. They stand there awkward and sorrowful):

2nd Guard: We heard that,—you don't deserve to die, we know it.

Vanzetti: You have no guilt in what happens to us.

1st Guard: We all believe that you are innocent.

2nd Guard: We learn here on the inside how to distinguish between good men and bad.

Sacco: We, too, have learned in these seven years how to distinguish between those who slander people and murder for the state and those who, though they are employed by the state, try to fulfill their duty with compassion and kindness.

2nd Guard: Oh, yes, we also have guards in American prisons who are without a heart for the prisoners.

3rd Guard: But you two have us all on your side.

Vanzetti: We are thankful to you for all of the small kindnesses you've shown us.

4th Guard: To men like you! If only our superiors were such men!

3rd Guard: If we could let you escape—we would do it.

Sacco: We believe you. You, too, are unfortunate, you, too, are exploited and violated.

1st Guard: We have learned a lot from you in the short time you were here, and we will cherish your memory.

Sacco: Teach your children to be good people—and to love freedom.

Vanzetti: Be certain that we die without animosity toward you. You have done what you could to lighten our last days.

2nd Guard *(goes toward them, gives them his hand)*: I had believed that I served justice in this house. Now I know better.

4th Guard: I promise you from now on we are going to see only misfortune in all prisoners.

3rd Guard: And help them.

Sacco: How did Madeiros take the news?

1st Guard: He's lying in the next cell over, sleeping. We are only to wake him when it's time. I'm going to take a look in now.—Farewell, believe us that we admire you and mourn you.

(The guards wipe their eyes. Sacco and Vanzetti shake their hands.)

Sacco: We thank you for everything. *(Guards exit.)*

Vanzetti: They have no happy life in this job. They are poor people.

Sacco: And good people.—I am sorry for Madeiros, too.

Vanzetti: He doesn't even have the thought of dying for a good cause to consol him.

Sacco: And yet I believe it has occurred to him that he, too, is but a victim of capitalism.

Vanzetti: What he did for us, that was a good deed, and he knows it, and that gives him the satisfaction that lets him sleep in peace before dying.

Sacco: They're having Madeiros executed together with us in order to stress the connection between our death and the robbery-murder through this gesture.

Vanzetti: Yes,—but at most they'll accomplish that together with us a common bandit dies before the eyes of the world proletariat for the cause of freedom.

Sacco: His death sanctifies his life. He belongs now to us and his name will live on together with ours in the history of the martyrs of the revolutionary movement.

Vanzetti: We die without having spilled blood. But we don't want to raise ourselves above the poor whom the struggle for existence has made into criminals. There is a class below the proletariat.

Sacco: Once the workers have realized that, then into the war camp of the revolution will come pouring all those who poverty has most utterly demeaned, who have suffered injury even to their souls!

(Pause.)

Vanzetti: I feel totally free and in good spirits.

Sacco: Me, too, Vanzetti. The end is easy, even if it was hard to say goodbye.

Vanzetti: Do you know how long they've kept us waiting for the end? Seven years, three months and 17 days.

Sacco: I wouldn't wish it even on our tormenters to have to go through that. They are all merely the executors of a bad principle.

Vanzetti: Of the reasons of state.

Enter Warden Hendry.

Hendry (*hesitantly*): I have the duty to tell you that your time is up.

(Sacco and Vanzetti embrace.)

Sacco: Brother!

Vanzetti: Brother! (*They silently follow the warden.*)

The scene grows dark. The rear curtain goes up. In the background something rises, the electric chair in half-darkness. Next to it on either side an executioner. The stage (*in front of the chair*) is for a moment empty. Then appear Warden Hendry, five Attendants, four Doctors, the Sheriff and a Journalist.

Hendry: Sheriff, would you take your place over here, the doctors here, you are the permitted representative of the press?

Journalist: Yes.

(Shows each his place.)

Hendry: Take your places over here like this. (*To the Attendants.*) You will now bring forward the offenders. After I have pronounced to them the decision of the Governor, lead Sacco and Vanzetti back into the adjoining individual cells. Madeiros will be executed first. (*Exit Attendants, returning with Sacco, Vanzetti and Madeiros.*)

Hendry: You, Nicola Sacco, Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Celestino Madeiros, have been condemned by final legal verdict to death by electric chair. The judgment has been confirmed by the Governor of the State of Massachusetts. I disclose to you that you shall now receive your punishment.

A Chaplain enters.

Chaplain: The church does not want to leave you unattended on the difficult road you are about to travel.

Vanzetti: Don't trouble yourself with us, good man.

Chaplain: God forgives sinners, too.

Sacco: Really, we have no need of your support.

Chaplain (*to Madeiros*): But you, my son, surely won't refuse the consolation of the church in this hour.

Madeiras (*apathetic*): Leave me alone.

Chaplain: But consider—even if you have fallen out with your savior—

Sacco: We wish to die as we lived.

Vanzetti: And we have spent our lives outside of the pious institutions of your social order.

Chaplain: So may God have mercy on your souls. *(Exit.)*

Sheriff: Take the condemned Sacco and Vanzetti to their cells. Madeiros stays here.
(Sacco and Vanzetti shake Madeiros's hand and are led away.)

Hendry: Executioners, carry out the duties of your office!

(The executioners lead Madeiros onto the electric chair, put on his mask. Motion of the Warden's hand. Darkness. The humming of the machine can be heard. There is light. The doctors are leaning over Madeiros's corpse.)

A Doctor: He is dead. *(The corpse is carried aside.)*

Sheriff: Nicola Sacco!

Sacco *(appears accompanied by the Guards)*: Long live anarchy! *(He goes toward the chair. As he is being strapped in)*: Farewell, my wife! Farewell, my children! And all my friends! *(Darkness.)* I am innocent!—Mother!

(The humming of the machine can be heard. Light. Doctors bent over the corpse.)

A Doctor: He is dead. *(The corpse is carried aside.)*

Sheriff: Bartolomeo Vanzetti!

Vanzetti *(appears accompanied by the Guards, goes toward the chair, shakes the hands of both executioners. Stays standing before the chair)*: I repeat here in the face of death: I am innocent. I have surely committed many an injustice, but never a crime. I thank all those who have fought for us. I am an innocent man, just as my comrade in fate Sacco was innocent. *(Sits down on the chair. Darkness.)* I forgive the men who do this to me. *(The humming of the machine can be heard. Light. Doctors stand bent over the corpse.)*

A Doctor: He is dead. *(The corpse is carried to the others.)*

Hendry: I declare you dead, according to the law. The sentence of the court has thus been legally carried out.

Voices from outside: Revenge! Down with the State! Long live the Revolution!

C u r t a i n.

Scene 15

Sacco and Vanzetti lie in state among flowers.

Children lower red and black flags over them.

Choir of men, women and children:

Brothers, your names still live on,
with the flags we bear them on,
forever immortal.

When liberty's red flame blazes bright,
may its glow to the world declare
your death and declare your fight.

True to your bold souls we stay,
which show us tomorrow's way.
Brothers, to you we pledge:
For facing the State's murderous creed,
may your torments' every hour
be a lever to our deed.

Struggle, your satisfaction,
against State and Reaction,
struggle until the day
the spell of power has been broken,
when in every land on the Earth
the workers have awoken.

Brothers, you who for us died,
your blood flows unpacified,
until the masses win.
Class war and class solidarity
shall give into the people's hands
land, farm tools and factory.

Your longing and your distress
are a whip and star to us,
Sacco and Vanzetti!
Deathless model to humanity,
a free world your memorial:
Socialism, Anarchy!

The End.

Postscript

No dramatization in the usual sense was intended with the scenic adaptation of the Sacco-Vanzetti tragedy. The historical sequence of events created a drama of such outrageous vividness that essentially nothing remained for poetic invention. Therefore, I have considered my only duty to be the arrangement for the stage of the actual occurrences into dialogues and suggested actions, thereby emphasizing specific facts which were meaningful to the evolution of events. Personal invention played therein the smallest role. Even individual speeches and statements—for example, the frequently incredibly crass-sounding spitefulness of Judge Thayer—are multiply authenticated by the documentary record. For the most part, I have interpolated into their conversations verbatim the letters or other declarations of the two martyrs of the revolutionary idea of anarchism. The only freedom which I have allowed myself in the portrayal of events consists therein, that for stage-technical reasons I have repeatedly allowed characters to appear simultaneously in the same place who were perhaps separated. I know well, for example, that Sacco and Vanzetti were each kept in one-man cells most of the time. Also, Governor Fuller did not likely speak with Sacco, Vanzetti and Madeiros together in one cell, but rather with each separately in an administrative room of the prison. But it is a guaranteed fact that on July 22, 1927 Fuller visited the three men in prison and raised the anarchists' hopes and shook their hands. External formalities in the construction of scenes and in the arrangement of encounters and dialogues are therefore for the most part my work. The internal coherence of the piece is, however, the pure transference of reality onto the theater. Not one of the characters called by name who here make their appearance has been invented, and all the names mentioned along the way are historical. It remained as my actual duty to make with the flow of events a certain revolutionary idea into the bearer of the drama. The title of the piece indicates what thought in my opinion should be put to the fore in a production. The drama of the anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti must also in performance be fully realized as an anarchist drama.

—*Erich Mühsam*

[tr. CR Edmonston, Aug. 23, 2007]