

podium.

CUT TO: STEVE'S MOTHER, on wooden bench in the gallery area, listening intently. Her face looks worried.

O'BRIEN

The State correctly says that the laws of a society provide protection for its citizens. When a crime is committed, it is the State that must apply the law in a manner that offers redress and that brings the guilty parties to justice. But the laws also protect the accused, and that is the wonder and beauty of the American system of justice. We don't drag people out of their beds in the middle of the night and lynch them. We don't torture people. We don't beat them. We apply the law equally to both sides. The law that protects society protects all of society. In this case we will show that the evidence that the State will produce is seriously flawed. We will show not only that there is room for reasonable doubt—and you will hear more about that idea at the end of this trial—but that the doubt that Steve Harmon has committed any crime, any crime at all, is overwhelming.

As Mr. Harmon's attorney all I ask of you, the jury, is that you look at Steve Harmon now and remember that at this moment the American system of justice demands that

you consider him innocent. He is innocent until proven guilty. If you consider him innocent now, and by law you must, if you have not prejudged him, then I don't believe we will have a problem convincing you that nothing the State will produce will challenge that innocence. Thank you.

CUT TO: BRIGGS.

BRIGGS

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Asa Briggs, and I will be defending Mr. King. Miss Petrocelli, representing the State, has presented this case in very broad and grandiose terms. But you will soon see that her key witnesses are among the most self-serving, heartless people imaginable. Some of them will begin their testimony by swearing that they are criminals. You will have the unpleasant task of listening to people who have committed crimes, who have lied and stolen, and in at least one instance has been an admitted, and let me emphasize this, an admitted accomplice to murder. But in the end you will have the opportunity to judge the State's key witnesses and to deliver a just verdict. What I am asking you to do is just that. Judge what they bring up on the witness stand, and then deliver your just verdict. Thank you.