

Meridian 7-1212

From the Columbia Radio Workshop

A radio play by Irving Reese

First broadcast August 24, 1939.

Cast

Announcer

Time service operators

Dot Day

Miss Tanner

Helen Cleary

Miss Wallace, their supervisor

Other phone operators

Hotel operator

British operator

British overseas operator

American operator

Unnamed Writer for *Manhattanite* magazine

Jim Fawcett, same

Male voice

Mr. Bradley, manager of time service

John

Grace, his wife

Joe and

Scott, American drunks in London

Percival, uptight British desk clerk

Ed, a lawyer

Neal, his assistant

Johnson, a criminal

DOT (F)

When you hear the signal, the time

will be 11:30.

SFX TONE

ANNCR The Columbia Radio workshop
presents as the eighth program in
its festival series...

DOT Meridian 7-1212.

ANNCR Written and directed by Irving
Reese.

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:30 and one quarter.

SFX TONE.

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:30 and one half.

SFX TONE.

DOT (F) When you hear the signal,

MUSIC DRAMATIC UNDER

the time will be 11:30 and (fade
off)

MUSIC DOWN AND OUT

SFX TYPEWRITER

WRITER

Damn!

SFX PAPER PULLED FROM TYPEWRITER

WRITER

Why can't I get something all
night?

SFX TYPEWRITER

WRITER

Oh, hello, Jim. I didn't know you
were here.

JIM

And I wasn't. Just came back to
pick up some things I left.

WRITER

Anybody else out there?

JIM.

No. You know you're the only greasy
grind on the staff. What're you
doing here so late?

WRITER

Oh, I'm stuck for about 500 words
to fill a "Comments" page. My
mind's gone blank.

JIM

Anything I can do?

WRITER Mm-hmm. You can get me a cigarette.
I finished the third pack an hour ago.

JIM Sure. Here.

WRITER Thanks. Maybe this'll be the Camel that broke the straw's back.

JIM Oh, very bad. You need some sleep.

WRITER Sleep? I can't go home unless this gets finished, and I can't finish this unless I get some sleep. What do you suggest, Mr. Worst of Experience?

JIM Go home.

WRITER Now stop being an idiot. I gotta have the copy in the hands of the printers at nine tomorrow morning.

JIM Ah, that's tough.

WRITER What time is it anyway? I've probably missed the last train connection.

JIM Dunno. Left my watch at home. You
can call up.

WRITER Call up what?

JIM Meridian 7-1212.

WRITER What's that?

JIM The telephone time service. Excuse
me, I forgot you were a commuter.

SFX PHONE PICK UP.

WRITER Meridian what?

JIM 7-1212.

SFX DIALING

WRITER M-E-7-1-2-1-2.

SFX PHONE RINGING.

WRITER Well that's something new I learned
today.

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:32 and one quarter.

SFX TONE.

SFX PHONE HANGUP.

WRITER 11:32. And I've been trying to get
an idea since 8 this morning.

(Pause) I got it!

JIM You got what?

WRITER My story.

SFX PHONE PICKUP, DIALS.

WRITER Boy, this is a natural.

JIM What are you talking about?

WRITER Now, wait, wait.

SFX PHONE RINGS

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:32 and one half.

SFX TONE.

WRITER Hello, operator. This is the editorial department of Manhattanite Magazine. I'd like to ask you...

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time will be 11:32

MAN Yeah, I know, girlie.

DOT AND WRITER (UNISON) and three quarters.

SFX TONE.

WRITER Listen, girlie, this is important. It'll only take a minute.

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time will be 11:33.

SFX TONE.

WRITER Hello, hello?

SFX JIGGLES PHONE.

WRITER Ah, she won't listen. Hey, Jim, help me out, willya?

JIM Sure, if you'll tell me what it's all about?

WRITER I think there's a swell story here. Hop a cab and run down to the time service office, will you? It must be right around here. Get all the dope you can - who calls, why they call.

JIM Hey, that's a swell idea.

WRITER You know what I want. The old human interest hoke.

JIM Yeah, sure.

WRITER I'll stay here and work it up in skeleton form. Soon as you get the facts, phone me.

JIM Well, all right.

WRITER Jim, you're a lifesaver. I'll do as much for you.

SFX WALKING AWAY.

JIM Ah, forget it. I'll be calling you.

WRITER Good luck.

MALE VOICE Meridian 7-1212.

SFX PHONE PICKUP, DIALS.

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:33 and three quarters.

SFX TONE.

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:34.

SFX TONE.

DOT (F) When you hear the signal,

DOT (F off) the time will be 11:34 and one
quarter.

SFX TONE

MISS TANNER (Whispers) Okay, Dot. I'll relieve
you now.

DOT Thanks, baby. I'll be back soon.

MISS TANNER When you hear the signal, the time
will be...

SFX DOOR CLOSES.

MISS WALLACE What's the trouble, Miss Day?

DOT I've got a pretty nasty headache.
I'm sorry, Miss Wallace.

MISS WALLACE Oh, that's all right. Do you want
to go home? I'll arrange relief.

DOT No. Thank you very much. I'll be
all right in a moment.

MISS WALLACE You go down to the rest room and
relax. I'll send Miss Cleary down
with you. Miss Cleary? Cleary?

HELEN Yes, Miss Wallace?

MISS WALLACE Will you go down to the rest room
with Miss Day? She isn't feeling
well.

HELEN Certainly. Come on, Dot.

DOT: Thanks, Helen. (off) Thank you,
Miss Wallace. I'll be back soon.

MISS WALLACE

That's all right. Stay as long as you like.

SFX WALKING

HELEN

What's the matter, kid?

DOT

Just a headache, Helen. I'll be all right.

HELEN

Sure it's just a headache?

DOT

Of course. Why?

HELEN

Aw, come on. Spill it, kid. You haven't been yourself for a long time now. Is it a guy?

DOT

No, no really, Helen.

HELEN

Then you're homesick.

DOT

No. (more intently) Honest, Helen, it's nothing.

HELEN

All right. All right, kid.

SFX DOOR OPENS

HELEN

Well, here we are.

SFX DOOR CLOSES

HELEN

Now you lie down on the couch.
There. Now I'll just tuck this
around you.

DOT

(sigh) I feel better already. I
don't need the blanket, Helen.

HELEN

Now you just lie still. While I fix
you something.

DOT

Don't bother, Helen.

SFX BOTTLE OPENS, POUR.

HELEN (off)

I wish you'd tell Aunt Helen what's
worrying you. Maybe she could help.

DOT (quiet)

I'll be all right.

HELEN

Sure you will. Here. Now drink this
down - fast.

SFX DRINKING.

HELEN

Now that's it.

DOT

Whew. Must be good medicine. Tastes
so bad.

HELEN Now that's the first time you've smiled in four weeks. (Pause) Now out with it. I know something's wrong, kid. And honest, it helps just to talk about it sometimes.

DOT (sobs) I can't.

HELEN All right, dear. Forget it. (pause) Where do you come from, Dot? I mean, your home town?

DOT Oswego.

HELEN That's in New York state, isn't it?

DOT Yes.

HELEN Why don't you call up home? Put through a long distance call. Maybe *that'll* help your spirits. Employees get a big discount.

DOT No. I'm not homesick, Helen.

HELEN Oswego? That's an Indian name, isn't it?

DOT Yes, I think so.

HELEN Queer sound to it. Yet it sounds familiar. I've heard it recently. Oh, yeah, I know. It was on the radio last night. That kid Lambert that's gonna be electrocuted

DOT (loud sob)

HELEN in Sing Sing tonight for the bank...

DOT (More sob)

HELEN Gee, Kid. Sure put my foot in it. Oh, I'm sorry, kid. Please don't cry.

DOT (crying)

HELEN Do you know him?

DOT He's my brother.

HELEN (aghast) Your brother?

DOT (falling apart) Oh, Tommy. Tommy. They're going to kill him tonight at twelve o'clock. And I can't do anything. I can't do anything except sit here and call out the time every fifteen seconds

- the last in Tommy's life. (pause)
And he didn't do it. He couldn't
have. He wrote me he was in the
bank when it happened and someone
swore he handed a gun to the man
who did the killing but he had
nothing to do with it.

HELEN (sympathetic reaction) Listen, kid. I'm gonna see the
supervisor. We'll both get the
night off. You come home with me.

DOT
Oh, no, Helen. I'd die if anyone
else knew. I'm so ashamed. I'm even
sorry I told you.

HELEN
But look, we don't have to tell
them why we're going. I'll just say
you're sick and I'm taking you
home.

DOT
No. No please. Nothing can help
now. I'm better off working. I'd go
mad just sitting around here
thinking about it. I'd go mad!
Please.

MUSIC DRAMATIC STARTS TO BUILD IN VOLUME

WITH DESCENDING CHORDS

DOT Let's go back now.

HELEN All right, kid.

MUSIC FADES OUT

SFX DOOR OPENS

JIM Mr. Bradley?

BRADLEY Yes?

JIM I'm sorry to disturb you at this
hour. My name's Fawcett.
Manhattanite Magazine.

BRADLEY Well, I'm glad to know you, Mr.
Fawcett. I'm a Manhattanite fan.
It's a swell magazine.

JIM (chuckles) Well, thanks. That should make
things easier.

BRADLEY What can I do for you?

JIM Well we thought it might be an interesting article on your telephone time service.

BRADLEY Good. We won't mind the publicity. Now just what did you want to know about it?

JIM Well, you know the Comments page in our magazine - interesting facts about all sorts of things.

BRADLEY Yes.

JIM Well we'd like to do one like that on the time service. How many calls you get, how many times an hour, why people call, how you pick the girls, well, you know what I mean.

BRADLEY Yes, of course. Suppose we go right to the operations room. You can actually watch the girl on duty work, and I'll explain it all as we go along.

JIM Oh, fine.

SFX FOOTSTEPS

JIM You know, lots of people think you
use phonograph records.

BRADLEY Oh, no.

SFX DOOR OPENS AND CLOSESSFX FOOTSTEPS START AND CONTINUE.

BRADLEY This way, Mr. Fawcett. You see, we
use the girls on the regular
operating staff. They get a voice
and diction test first. If they
qualify they do one hour of duty on
the time circuit a day then go back
to their other work.

JIM They just sit there and wait for
the calls to come in?

BRADLEY Oh, no. They have no way of knowing
if anyone is on the line or not.
They call time every fifteen

seconds regardless. You hear them
but they can't hear you.

Jim (chuckles)

I know. We tried to question the
girl and she paid no attention.

SFX FOOTSTEPS STOP

BRADLEY

Well here we are. You see the girl
in the glass-enclosed office?

JIM:

Yeah.

BRADLEY

She's the time service operator.
It's all soundproofed so no noise
gets through.

JIM

Oh, yes.

BRADLEY

She's got three watches to check
by, you'll notice. That little
green light is the signal for her
to start talking. The tone signal
comes automatically.

JIM

And the girls are relieved right on
the hour?

BRADLEY

Yes, indeed. It would get pretty tedious if it lasted longer.

JIM

I should say. Four times a minute, 240 times an hour. Say, how about that girl who just went in? Is she going to relieve that girl on the board?

BRADLEY

Yes, I guess so. But they usually change on the hour.

SFX DOOR OPENS.

BRADLEY

Oh, Miss Tanner?

MISS TANNER

Yes, Mr. Bradley?

BRADLEY

How is it you're getting relief now?

MISS TANNER

It's Miss Day's trick. She wasn't feeling well. I relieved her a few minutes ago. Now she's back to finish up.

BRADLEY

I see. Thank you.

JIM

May we go right into the office?
I'd like to listen for a while.

BRADLEY Certainly. But we'll have to
whisper if you want to talk to me
in there. It might be picked up on
the mike.

JIM Oh, of course.

SFX DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES.

DOT ...hear the signal the time will be
11:40 and one quarter.

SFX TONE.

BRADLEY (Whispers) Sit down, Mr. Fawcett.

JIM (Whispers) Thanks.

DOT (off) When you hear the signal the time
will be 11:40 and one half.

SFX TONE.

JIM (Whispers) Mr. Bradley, would it be possible
to trace a few calls? I'd like to
find out just why people use the

service. Is it because their
watches stop or what?

DOT (off)

When you hear the signal the time
will be 11:40 and three quarters.

SFX TONE.

BRADLEY (Whispers)

We don't know. All the calls come
in on the dial system and you can't
trace dials.

JIM (Whispers)

Ah, that's too bad. It would be
interesting to know. Could you
offer a guess, from personal
knowledge? We could quote you...

DOT

When you hear the signal the time
will be 11:41.

SFX TONE.

BRADLEY (Whispers)

Your guess would be as good as
mine. Time plays an important part
in the lives of people in a big
city. We get several hundred calls
an hour. Maybe somebody trying to

HOTEL OP

Yes sir.

SFX DIALING.

HOTEL OP

I'm getting Bell Harbor 4-4642.

JOHN

Thank you.

SFX RINGS TWICE.

SFX PICKUP.

GRACE

Hello?

JOHN

Hello, Grace.

GRACE

John, where have you been? We've
been worried to death.

JOHN

I'm in town, darling.

GRACE

Oh, John. Why didn't you call and
say you'd be late? Where are you?

JOHN

I'm at a hotel, dear.

GRACE

But what are you doing at a hotel?

JOHN

I've got something very important
to tell you, Grace.

GRACE Oh, please save it till you get
home.

JOHN It can't wait.

GRACE But it's so late, dear. We've been
worried all day.

JOHN I've been pretty busy.

GRACE I know, but...

JOHN Grace, my insurance policy expires
at midnight.

GRACE That's nothing, John. You'll get
another when things pick up.

JOHN There isn't a chance, dear. I'm all
washed up.

GRACE But darling, I won't have you talk
that way. Now please come right
home. You can still get dinner.
I've got a swell roast, and I've
kept it warm. You'll feel better
after you've eaten. We'll find some

way out. (softly) We still have
each other.

JOHN If it were only us I wouldn't care,
 dear. The kids I'm thinking of. It
 isn't fair to them.

GRACE (Perky) Priscilla got a medal at school
 today, John. She stayed up just to
 show it to you. (Anxious) Please,
 please come right home.

JOHN My policy is for fifty thousand
 dollars, Grace. It expires in about
 18 minutes.

GRACE John, what are you thinking of? I
 won't listen! I won't listen!

JOHN I'm going to leave you, darling.
 Please take care of Priscilla and
 Jim.

GRACE John! Don't...

SFX PHONE CRADLE CLICK.

HOTEL OP Hotel operator.

JOHN Operator, get me Meridian 7-1212.
And stay on the line.

HOTEL OP Yes sir.

SFX PHONE DIALS.

SFX PHONE RINGS

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:44 and one-quarter.

SFX TONE

JOHN Did you hear that, Operator?

HOTEL OP Yes sir, she said it was 11:44 and
a quarter.

JOHN That's right, operator. Remember
that.

HOTEL OP I beg your pardon, sir?

JOHN I said remember that. Stay on the
line.

SFX GUNSHOT. BODY FALLS.

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:44 and one half.

SFX TONE

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:44 and three quarters.

SFX TONE

DOT (F) When you hear

DOT (F off) the signal, the time will be 11:45.

SFX TONE

DOT When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:45 and one quarter.

SFX TONE

JIM (whispers) Of course this girl is only
answering calls from New York City,
isn't she?

BRADLEY (whispers) What do you mean, Mr. Fawcett?

JIM (whispers) Well, I mean there wouldn't be any reason for anyone outside New York City to call Meridian for the time.

DOT (Under) When you hear the signal, the time will be 11:45 and one half.

SFX TONE

BRADLEY (whispers) Oh, no. New York City has its own local time service because of the difference in time. Now in Chicago, people call Cathedral 8000. And in Los Angeles, Overick 8900. It would be very silly for someone from Chicago, or anyplace outside of New York to call here for the time, don't you think?

JIM (whispers) Of course. It was stupid of me to ask. It would be very silly for anyone outside of New York
... (fades)

SFX BIG BEN CHIMES.

SCOTT (Drunk) I said Percival, send us a drink.

PERCIVAL Well, it's quite late, sir.

JOE Quite late sir, says he. C'mere
c'mere c'mere. Listen, Percival,
it's never too late for another
drink.

SCOTT and JOE (Raucous laughter)

PERCIVAL Gentlemen, gentlemen, don't you
think you better go to your rooms?
It's nearly five a.m.

SCOTT (imitates Percival) Don't you think you better go to
your rooms?

JOE Laughs.

PERCIVAL (blustery protests)

SCOTT Hey now. We want another drink.
SFX SLAPS BAR
And we ain't going to our rooms
SFX SLAPS BAR
till we get another drink.
SFX SLAPS BAR

JOE You tell 'em ole boy ole buddy ole
pal. Now send us another drink.

PERCIVAL I'm very sorry, gentlemen. You're in London, you know, and it's against the law to serve intoxicating spirits at this hour.

JOE We don't want intoxicating spirits. We want Scotch.

SCOTT and JOE laugh.

SCOTT That's a good one. We don't want intoxicating spirits. We want Scotch.

PERCIVAL Gentlemen, you'll awaken all the guests.

JOE ou betcha we'll wake up all your guests...if you don't get us a drink.

SCOTT You said it, ole pal. You said it. A drink to the king!

JOE No no no no no no. We've been drinking to the king all day. Let's drink to the queen.

SCOTT Right right right right. This one
is for the queen. All right,
Queenie!

SCOTT and JOE Laugh.

PERCIVAL Gentlemen, I am only the desk
cl(a)erk. I have nothing to do with
liquor...

SCOTT Call up the Queen and tell her Joe
and his li'l pal from New York
wanna have a drink.

JOE That's right. That's right. Gimme
gimme gimme that phone there. I'll
get Buckleham Palace.

PERCIVAL Gentlemen, gentlemen, please. The
Queen's asleep.

SCOTT Then get us a drink.

PERCIVAL Gentlemen (exasperated) It's five
a.m. There are rules prohibiting...

JOE Now listen, listen, Percival. It
ain't five o'clock in little old
New York, now is it?

PERCIVAL Why, no, no sir.

JOE See, we're from little old New York
and we abide by their rules. Not
these, y'see? That's a fine way to
treat Americans.

SCOTT That's right, we go by New York
rules, not these. Why it's only
eleven o'clock in li'l old New
York.

JOE Naw, palsy. That's where you're
wrong. That's where you're wrong.
In li'l ole New York it's 12
o'clock.

SCOTT Oh yeah, how's about daylight
savings time? How's about that?

JOE That ain't got nuthin' to do with
it. (loudly) Nuthin'.

PERCIVAL Please, gentlemen, please don't shout.

SCOTT Well, what about it, Percival? What time is it in li'l ole New York?

PERCIVAL I believe there is a difference of five hours. That would make it 12 o'clock in New York.

SCOTT Well what about the daylight savings time, huh?

JOE There ain't no more daylight savings time.

SCOTT Oh yeah, well five bucks says there is. Five bucks.

JOE Okay, it's a bet. Oh boy, I got a sucker here. Here, give me the phone, Percival. I'll get you the time all right.

SFX RATTLES CRADLE

JOE Hello, hello?

BRIT OP (F) Are you there?

JOE I never heard no complaints,
dearie. (Laughs)

BRIT OP (F) I beg your pardon.

JOE Aw, that's all right. You didn't do
nuthin'. Get me Meridian 7-1212.

BRIT OP (F) Sorry, sir, but there is no such
exchange.

JOE Ah that's what you think. Yes there
is. You just get me New York.

BRIT OP (F) All right, sir, I'll get you
overseas service.

JOE Overseas? Oh, yeah, yeah.

BRIT OVERSEAS OP (F) Overseas service.

JOE Get me Meridian 7-1212 in New York,
Li'l old New York.

BRIT OVERSEAS OP (F) Just a moment, sir. Hello New York,
hello New York.

US OP (F) Hello London. Number please.

BRIT OVERSEAS OP(F) Meridian 7-1212.

US OP (F) You must be mistaken, London.
That's the New York time service.

JOE No mistake at all, dearie. You just
get it.

US OP (F) Very well, sir.

SFX PHONE RINGS

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:50 and one half.

SFX TONE

JOE Thank you, dearie.

SFX PHONE HANGUP.

SCOTT What'd she say? What'd she say?

JOE (cackles) She said the time was 11:50 and,
uh, somethin'. (Cackles again) I
told 'em, didn't I, Percival? This
wise guy.

PERCIVAL Yes, sir, You told him.

JOE Hand over the five bucks, Mr. Smarty. Hand it over. Get it up.

SCOTT Okay, okay. Here.

PERCIVAL Begging your pardon, sir...

JOE What'd you do?

PERCIVAL The transatlantic call will be three pounds.

SCOTT How much is three pounds?

PERCIVAL That is fifteen dollars in American money.

JOE That's okay, that's okay. Mr. Wise Guy here, he'll pay it.

SCOTT Oh, no. No no no no no. Calling New York was your idea, not mine.

JOE Oh, so you're gonna get technical, eh? Reneging?

PERCIVAL Gentlemen...

JOE So you're gonna Welch, huh?

SCOTT Yeah, what are you gonna do about
it?

JOE This is what I'm gonna do about it

SFX THEY FIGHT

PERCIVAL Pu-lease! Pu-lease! Pu-lease!

FADE OUT.

MUSIC BRIDGE

LAWYER Johnson, there's still a little
time left. Why don't you tell the
truth? We'll protect you. We'll use
every penny we have to see that
you're taken care of.

JOHNSON Listen, Mr. Lawyer, for the
fiftieth time. I told them
everything I know on the witness
stand. You better get these ropes
off my wrist and let me outta here.

LAWYER Johnson, you're a filthy liar and
you know it. Don't you realize

you're sending an innocent kid to
the electric chair.

JOHNSON

I'll bust right out cryin' in a
minute

LAWYER

All right. There isn't enough time
to try being decent with you. I've
done everything I can. Now get
this. I don't care what happens to
me, but I'm not letting that kid
burn. Sit here and think it over.
If you change your mind, call me.
I'll be right behind that door. And
remember this: if Tommy Lambert
dies, you're not going to leave
this room alive.

JOHNSON

Ah, you can't scare me.

LAWYER

All right, just think it over.

SFX FOOTSTEPS, DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES.

NEAL

How'd you make out, Ed?

LAWYER

Can't get a thing out of him. He's
as tight-lipped as when I started,
five hours ago.

NEAL

What're you gonna do?

LAWYER

I told him I'd wait till he called
me. I told him if he didn't, and
Tommy Lambert died, he'd never
leave that room.

NEAL

But Ed, you know that rat won't
talk.

LAWYER

But what can I do?

NEAL

What time is it?

LAWYER

Quarter to twelve.

NEAL

Don't you realize that kid is gonna
die in fifteen minutes?

LAWYER

Realize? God, I haven't slept a
minute since he was convicted. I
know the kid's innocent. I lost it
for him. I couldn't help him.

NEAL There's no time for that. I'll go
in and have a talk with Mr.
Johnson.

LAWYER No, Neal. I won't let you. I've
been a lawyer for 20 years now.
When this gets out, I'm washed up.
But I'll take Johnson with me.
You're just starting out. I won't
let you get mixed up in it.

NEAL I just want three minutes with him.

SFX FOOTSTEPS.

LAWYER (off) Neal!

SFX DOOR OPENS, CLOSES.

NEAL All right, Johnson. The party's
over.

JOHNSON Ah, the assistant mastermind. I
didn't know you were here.

NEAL Don't make me laugh. Johnson, you
said on the witness stand that you

saw Tommy Lambert hand the gun to Roy Peters in the Oswego National Bank.

JOHNSON

So what?

NEAL

Was that true, Johnson?

JOHNSON

Yes, Mr. Lawyer. On my word of honor as a good Boy Scout, (shouts in pain) Cut that out! Stop!

NEAL (Through clenched teeth) How's that feel, Johnson?

JOHNSON

I'll take care of you later. Ow!
Don't! You're killin' me!

NEAL

Would you like to talk now, rat?

LAWYER (off)

Neal! Neal! What are you doing?

NEAL

Giving Mr. Johnson a taste of what he needs.

JOHNSON

Ow! Stop him!

NEAL

Yeah, this won't bother him any more than the shock of 2000 volts through the Lambert kid's body.

JOHNSON You better stop him or you'll burn
too! Oooowww!

NEAL Feel it, skunk!

JOHNSON Stop it! Stop it! Okay, I lied. I
got paid to say I saw the gun. I
needed the money.

NEAL All right, rat! Now he'll be quiet
for a minute. We've got to move
fast. What time is it?

LAWYER Quarter to twelve.

NEAL But you said it was quarter to
twelve last time I asked.

LAWYER Good Lord. My watch stopped. I'll
get it.

SFX PHONE PICKUP, DIALS.

LAWYER M-E-7-1212.

SFX PHONE RINGS.

DOT (F) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:59.

SFX TONE

SFX HANGUP.

LAWYER

Oh God.

NEAL

What's the matter?

LAWYER

An innocent boy is going to die. In
one minute.

DOT

When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:59 and one quarter.

SFX TONE

(Pause)

DOT

When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:59 and one half.

SFX TONE

(Pause)

DOT

When you hear the signal, the time
will be 11:59 (beat) and three
quarters.

SFX TONE.

(Pause)

DOT (falling apart) When you hear the signal, the time
will be 12 o'clock.

SFX TONE

DOT Tommy! Tommy!

SFX ELECTRIC CHAIR HUM.

ANNCR You have been listening to the CBS
presentation of Meridian 7-1212, an
original radio play by Irving
Reese. It was produced and directed
by the author through an
arrangement with Paramount Pictures
and came to you from Hollywood as
the eighth program in the Columbia
Workshop Festival Series. It
originally aired August 24, 1939.

