

**ORIGINAL**

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

In The Court of Appeals

APPEAL FROM AIKEN COUNTY

Doyet A. Early, III, Circuit Court Judge

THE STATE,

RESPONDENT,

V.

WILLIAM R. PEARSON,

APPELLANT

APPELLATE CASE NO. 2013-000098

RECORD ON APPEAL

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**SC Court of Appeals**

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State of South Carolina )  
County of Aiken ) In the Court  
Of General Sessions

Indictment No.: 2012-GS-02-01518

State of South Carolina, )  
Plaintiff. )  
vs. ) Transcript of Record  
William Ralph Pearson, )  
Defendant. )

October 15-16, 2012  
Aiken, South Carolina

B E F O R E:

The Honorable Doyet A. Early III, Judge and a jury.

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1 doubt. He has pled not guilty to these charges, so as I  
2 said, he is presumed to be innocent and that's what this  
3 trial will be about. The State has the burden of proving  
4 his guilt to you beyond a reasonable doubt.

5 Let me ask you some questions about the indictment  
6 or about the allegations or about the case and if any of  
7 these questions apply to you, please stand, identify  
8 yourself once again, and we will address the question.

9 All right. Any member of the jury panel now or in  
10 the past, have you been related by blood or marriage do you  
11 now or have you in the past had a close personal or social  
12 relationship with the defendant, William J. Pearson -- hold  
13 on a second.

14 The indictment on the front says William R. The  
15 body says William J. What is it?

16 **MR. MILLER:** No, sir, the body is William R.  
17 Pearson, along with William J. Pearson.

18 **THE COURT:** Any member of the jury panel related by  
19 blood or marriage or do you now or have you in the past had  
20 a close personal or social relationship with the defendant,  
21 William R. Pearson? If so, please stand.

22 (WHEREUPON there was no answer.)

23 **THE COURT:** I am informed that the potential  
24 witnesses in the trial of this case are as follows -- is  
25 the victim, John Hinds?

1           **MR. MILLER:** Your Honor, it's John Hinds and a Sue  
2 Beerman. Ms. Beerman is the one who will be testifying.

3           **THE COURT:** All right. Potential witnesses are  
4 one, John Hinds, Sue Beerman, William James Pearson, Jr.,  
5 Detroit Spires.

6           (WHEREUPON Officer Spires stood.)

7           **THE COURT:** Thank you.

8           And Investigator Thomas Galardi.

9           (WHEREUPON Officer Galardi stood.)

10          **THE COURT:** Thank you.

11          Any member of the jury panel related by blood or  
12 marriage or do you know or have you in the past had a close  
13 personal or social relationship with any of the potential  
14 witnesses? If so, please stand.

15          **THE JUROR:** Yes, sir, Juror No. 22. I used to work  
16 with Tom Galardi and I also know him from an Aiken County  
17 Leadership Class we were in together.

18          **THE COURT:** The fact that you at one time in the  
19 past were involved, I guess that was volunteer work or  
20 regular work?

21          **THE JUROR:** This was at SRS. He actually worked at  
22 a different department, but I knew him previously from the  
23 Leadership Aiken County class that I was in.

24          **THE COURT:** I understand. The fact that y'all were  
25 employed together at one time in the past, would that, sir,

1 in any way keep you from being a fair and impartial juror  
2 in this case?

3 THE JUROR: No, sir.

4 THE COURT: Thank you. You may be seated.

5 Yes, sir?

6 THE JUROR: Juror 118, Rick McLeod, I also know Tom  
7 Galardi from Sertoma, which is a civic organization.

8 THE COURT: I understand. The fact that you and  
9 Mr. Galardi were associated in a civic organization in the  
10 past, would that preclude or keep you, sir, from being fair  
11 and impartial and try the case based solely on what you  
12 hear in the courtroom?

13 THE JUROR: No, sir, it wouldn't.

14 THE COURT: Thank you very much.

15 This case, the State of South Carolina will be  
16 represented by two assistant solicitors, Mr. David Miller  
17 and Mr. Sam Grimes.

18 The defendant will be represented by members of the  
19 Aiken County Public Defender's Office, Mr. Barry Thompson  
20 and Mr. Andy Smith.

21 Any member of the jury panel now or in the past  
22 have had legal work, services, performed by any of the four  
23 lawyers? If so, please stand.

24 Any member of the jury --

25 (WHEREUPON one juror was standing.)

1 THE COURT: Yes, sir, your name?

2 THE JUROR: 138, Brad Powell. I had -- I got a DUI  
3 and it was in the public defender's office like a couple of  
4 years ago.

5 THE COURT: DUI, first, second, third, fourth?

6 THE JUROR: DUI first.

7 THE COURT: First?

8 THE JUROR: And I also have family that works in  
9 the courthouse here, Jessie Busby.

10 THE COURT: Okay. The fact that they helped you  
11 out at one time or represented you, would that in any way  
12 keep you from being a fair and impartial juror?

13 THE JUROR: No, sir.

14 THE COURT: Thank you, you may be seated.

15 Any member of the jury panel related by blood or  
16 marriage or do you know or have you in the past had a close  
17 personal or social relationship with any of the lawyers  
18 I've just called? If so, please stand.

19 (WHEREUPON there was no answer.)

20 THE COURT: Ladies and gentlemen, the indictment,  
21 which is not evidence in the case, is simply the charging  
22 document by way this case comes into the courtroom. It  
23 sets out certain allegations and I will tell you what the  
24 allegations are. As I said, that is not evidence in the  
25 case. The State still has the burden of proving the case

1 beyond a reasonable doubt. It is alleged that here in  
2 Aiken County, Mr. Pearson, William R. Pearson, along with a  
3 person named William J. Pearson, on or about May 28th of  
4 2012, willfully and unlawfully entered the dwelling of one  
5 John Hinds, located at [REDACTED] Avenue, in New  
6 Ellenton without consent and with intent to commit a crime  
7 therein. Anybody know anything about an event that took  
8 place at [REDACTED] Avenue in New Ellenton, South Carolina,  
9 on May 28, 2012, where it's alleged that the -- Mr. William  
10 R. Pearson unlawfully and without consent entered that  
11 dwelling? Anybody know anything at all about it? Anybody  
12 read anything about it, seen anything on TV? Seen anything  
13 on the internet? Anybody discussed it with you? Know  
14 anything at all about it?

15 (WHEREUPON there was no answer.)

16 **THE COURT:** Ladies and gentlemen, any member of the  
17 jury panel, have you ever been a victim of a burglary? You  
18 or your family member? Please stand.

19 **THE JUROR:** I'm Juror 134, Susan Pate. My home was  
20 burglarized just last week.

21 **THE COURT:** Last week?

22 **THE JUROR:** Yes, sir.

23 **THE COURT:** The fact that you had an unfortunate  
24 event, ma'am, would that in any way preclude or keep you  
25 from being a fair and impartial juror in the trial of this

1 case?

2 THE JUROR: Being that it's so new to me, I would  
3 say yes, sir. At this time.

4 THE COURT: All right. We're going to just remove  
5 her from this panel.

6 You stay with us, please, ma'am.

7 THE JUROR: Yes, sir.

8 THE COURT: Yes, sir, your name?

9 THE JUROR: 164, Scott Smith, our cars were broken  
10 into in July.

11 THE COURT: The fact that your car was broken into  
12 in July, would that in any way preclude or keep you, sir,  
13 from being a fair and impartial juror in the trial of this  
14 case?

15 THE JUROR: No, Your Honor.

16 THE COURT: Thank you, you may be seated.

17 THE JUROR: Juror 19, Daniel Brown. I was  
18 burglarized two or three years ago.

19 THE COURT: And sir, I ask you the same question,  
20 would that in any way have any affect on you being a fair  
21 and impartial juror in the trial of this case?

22 THE JUROR: Yes, sir, it will.

23 THE COURT: All right. Remove him, but let him  
24 stay with us.

25 THE CLERK: You have another one, sir.

1           **THE COURT:** Yes, sir, my Sertoma man. Your name?

2           **THE JUROR:** Juror 118, Rick McLeod, I had a vehicle  
3 brake in and my house.

4           **THE COURT:** All right. The fact that you  
5 experienced that, sir, would that preclude or keep you from  
6 being fair and impartial in the trial of the case?

7           **THE JUROR:** No, sir.

8           **THE COURT:** Thank you, you may be seated.

9           Have any others?

10          Yes, sir, your name?

11          **THE JUROR:** Juror No. 81, James Harrtman. My home  
12 was burglarized about fifteen years ago.

13          **THE COURT:** Would that have any affect on you being  
14 a fair and impartial juror?

15          **THE JUROR:** No, sir.

16          **THE COURT:** Thank you, you may be seated.

17          Anybody else?

18          (WHEREUPON there was no answer.)

19          **THE COURT:** Ladies and gentlemen of the jury panel,  
20 do I have anyone who has a family member or you, yourself  
21 employed with law enforcement, solicitor's office, attorney  
22 general's office, FBI, or any law enforcement agency,  
23 please stand.

24          Yes, sir? Your name again.

25          **THE JUROR:** 138 Brad Powell. My cousin Jessie

1 Busby works here and I have another cousin that works for  
2 the public defender's office.

3 THE COURT: For the record, Jessie who?

4 THE JUROR: Busby.

5 THE COURT: Thank you.

6 THE JUROR: Jessie Busby.

7 THE COURT: And the fact that you have those  
8 relatives in law enforcement, sir, would that keep you from  
9 being fair and impartial in the trial of the case?

10 THE JUROR: No, sir.

11 THE COURT: Thank you. You may be seated.

12 Do I have any member --

13 Yes, sir, your name?

14 THE JUROR: Juror 160, Richard Shelley, my brother  
15 works for Department of Public Safety.

16 THE COURT: In Aiken?

17 THE JUROR: Yes, sir.

18 THE COURT: The Department of Public Safety?

19 THE JUROR: Yes, sir.

20 THE COURT: This is in New Ellenton, right?

21 MR. MILLER: Yes, Your Honor.

22 THE COURT: The fact that you have a brother-in-law  
23 enforcement, sir, would that preclude or keep you from  
24 being fair and impartial in the trial of this case?

25 THE JUROR: No, sir.

1           **THE COURT:** Thank you. Do I have -- yes, ma'am?

2           Y'all stand up at once for me, please.

3           Your name, please?

4           **THE JUROR:** Juror No. 29, I'm Lewanda Campbell. My  
5 son, John Campbell is a deputy for McCormick County.

6           **THE COURT:** The fact that you have a son in law  
7 enforcement, ma'am, would that preclude or keep you from  
8 being fair and impartial?

9           **THE JUROR:** No, sir.

10          **THE COURT:** Thank you. Anyone else with family  
11 members in law enforcement?

12          Next question: Do I have any member of the jury  
13 panel who is a contributor to or a member of organizations  
14 that has -- that have as their primary concern the  
15 enforcement of law, such as CAVE, Citizens Against Violent  
16 Crime; SADD or MADD, those are Mother's Against Drunk  
17 Driving and Students Against Drunk Driving; or any police  
18 auxiliary organization or citizens groups, please stand.

19          (WHEREUPON there was no answer.)

20          **THE COURT:** Ladies and gentlemen, this is sort of a  
21 catch all, last question. One of my main responsibilities  
22 as a trial judge is to make sure that whoever is being  
23 tried in this courtroom, whether it be a criminal case or a  
24 civil case, they receive a fair trial. It's a fundamental  
25 right guaranteed to every citizen of the United States.

1 And the way we do that is we actually have two judges that  
2 work in the case. I'm the judge of the law. I tell you  
3 what or I instruct you what the law is, but more  
4 importantly, when we select twelve people, you act  
5 collectively as the judges of the facts in the case. And  
6 the way that works is, obviously, the State presents  
7 witnesses to prove their case beyond a reasonable doubt and  
8 the defendant has the opportunity if they choose to present  
9 their defense.

10 Now, I've been doing this a long time, about  
11 thirty-eight years, and I've tried a lot of cases as a  
12 lawyer and a lot of cases as a judge. One thing you can  
13 always pretty much count on is that you'll hear different  
14 views or entirely different testimony from the witnesses  
15 who testify in the case. Somebody might say it's gray,  
16 somebody might say it's purple. Somebody might say it's  
17 yellow. Somebody might say it's day, somebody might say  
18 it's night.

19 So being the judges of the facts you have to listen  
20 to everybody who testifies up here and you have to judge  
21 their credibility or their believability just like speaking  
22 with your grandchildren or your children or your wife or  
23 your husband or your employees, you just know sometimes how  
24 some people are telling the truth or they're not. But the  
25 twelve of you determine what the true facts are in the case

1 and you take those true facts as you find them to be and  
2 you apply it to the law as I give it to you and that's how  
3 we reach a decision in a criminal case.

4 Now, my question is this: Knowing what your  
5 responsibility is, do I have any member of the jury panel  
6 who is unable for any reason whatsoever, to perform that  
7 valuable civic duty? Do I have anyone for religious  
8 reasons, personal reasons, political reasons, any kind of  
9 reasons? I need to know now. Anybody who cannot perform  
10 that very, very important civic duty?

11 (WHEREUPON there was no answer.)

12 **THE COURT:** Any additional questions by the State?

13 **MR. MILLER:** Not by the State, Your Honor.

14 **THE COURT:** By the defendant?

15 **MR. THOMPSON:** Nothing from the defense, Your  
16 Honor.

17 **THE COURT:** All right. Five and ten?

18 **MR. MILLER:** Yes, sir.

19 Ready?

20 **THE CLERK:** Two alternates?

21 **THE COURT:** Ladies and gentlemen, if we were trying  
22 a car wreck case, or whether somebody was accusing their  
23 lawyer of malpractice or a breach of contract case where  
24 you were suing for damages, in a civil case, right now,  
25 Ms. Goddard would give me twenty names and the plaintiff

1 bringing the lawsuit and the defendant who's being sued,  
2 they would get a list and the plaintiff would have four  
3 strikes and the defendant would have four strikes, leaving  
4 us with twelve.

5 In a criminal case, we choose the jury a little  
6 different. We will randomly select from you and as your  
7 name is called randomly, you will come forward and stand  
8 right here in the front here between the two tables and the  
9 State has five strikes, the defendant has ten strikes and  
10 they can strike you for most any reason they want to, if  
11 you've got a red dress on, if you've got -- you know, they  
12 just don't like how you look, they do like your look,  
13 whatever. I don't know. They've got certain bounds they  
14 have to be within, so they can't just strike you for no  
15 reason, but they know what the bounds are, boundaries are.

16 So we'll go through that, the State having five and  
17 the defendant having ten, until I get twelve jurors and  
18 then I'll select two alternates. And the alternates, the  
19 State has one, the defendant has two. If your name is  
20 called, please come forward. If you have a purse or other  
21 personal items, bring it with you in the event that you are  
22 selected and keep it with you up here.

23 We now do it by computer. It's a random selection,  
24 some type of program that they have that gives me a random  
25 selection. We used to do it the old-fashioned way with a

1 little gray box, put your names in it, shake it, and pull  
2 it out. That's a lot quicker than this computer.

3 Just kidding, Ms. Goddard.

4 I think Ms. Goddard, if she had her rathers, she'd  
5 rather go back to the box. But when it works it works  
6 good. When it prints out.

7 (WHEREUPON there was a pause while waiting on the  
8 computer to print the random strike sheet.)

9 **JURY SELECTION**

10 **THE COURT:** Thank you for bearing with us. Okay.  
11 If your name the called, please come forward.

12 **THE CLERK:** Ladies and gentlemen, as I call your  
13 name, please come forward to the bar, turn and face the  
14 attorneys. If you have any belongings with you, please  
15 gather them and bring them with you.

16 Juror No. 187, Martha D. Wheeland. (White female.  
17 What say you to the State?

18 **MR. MILLER:** Please present this juror.

19 **THE CLERK:** What say you to the defense?

20 **MR. THOMPSON:** Please excuse this juror.

21 **THE COURT:** You may have a seat.

22 **THE CLERK:** Please return to your seat.

23 Juror No. 138, Brad D. Powell. (White male.

24 What say you to the State?

25 **MR. MILLER:** Please excuse this juror from the

1 trial of the case.

2 THE CLERK: Please return to your seat.

3 Juror No. 72, Hazel C. Gresham (black female.

4 What say you to the State?

5 MR. MILLER: Please present the juror.

6 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?

7 MR. THOMPSON: Please excuse this juror.

8 THE CLERK: Return to your seat, thank you.

9 Juror No. 153, Steven Salzman (white male.

10 What say you to the State?

11 MR. MILLER: Please present the juror.

12 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?

13 MR. THOMPSON: Please seat this juror.

14 THE CLERK: Please have a seat in the jury box on  
15 the left, sir.

16 Juror No. 141, Alysia Ritch. (White female.

17 What say you to the State?

18 MR. MILLER: Please present this juror.

19 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?

20 MR. THOMPSON: Please seat this juror.

21 THE CLERK: Please have a seat in the jury box on  
22 the left.

23 Juror No. 67 Edward F. Girardeau, Jr. (White male.

24 What say you to the State?

25 MR. MILLER: Please present the juror.

1 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?

2 MR. THOMPSON: Your Honor may we approach?

3 (WHEREUPON, there was a bench conference out of the  
4 hearing of the jury and the Court Reporter.)

5 THE COURT: Mr. Girardeau, you may have a seat.

6 Mr. Thompson, remind me when we finish to put that  
7 on the record.

8 MR. THOMPSON: Yes, sir.

9 THE CLERK: Juror No. 179, Hazel E. Truitt. (White  
10 female.

11 MR. THOMPSON: I apologize, Madame Clerk, did you  
12 say 179?

13 THE CLERK: 179:

14 THE COURT: Ms. Truitt, one of the rules is that  
15 you have to smile when you come up.

16 THE CLERK: What say you to the State?

17 MR. MILLER: Please present this juror.

18 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?

19 MR. THOMPSON: Please excuse this juror.

20 THE CLERK: Please have a seat. Thank you.

21 Juror No. 76, Dana Hall. (White female.

22 What say you to the State?

23 MR. MILLER: Please present the juror.

24 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?

25 MR. THOMPSON: Please seat this juror.

1           **THE CLERK:** Please have a seat in the jury box.

2 Thank you.

3           Juror No. 40, John D. Claussen. (White male.

4           What say you to the State?

5           **MR. MILLER:** Please present the juror.

6           **THE CLERK:** What say you to the defense?

7           **MR. THOMPSON:** Please seat this juror.

8           **THE CLERK:** Have a seat in the jury box to the

9 left.. Thank you.

10          Juror No. 114 Rita McCracken. (White female.

11          **THE COURT:** You skipped one.

12          **THE CLERK:** I'm sorry. Juror No. --

13          **THE COURT:** Hold on Ms. McCracken.

14          **THE CLERK:** I'm sorry, Ms. McCracken.

15          Juror No. 37, Robert B. Caudle. (White male.

16          What say you to the State?

17          **MR. MILLER:** Please present this juror.

18          **THE CLERK:** What say you to the defense?

19          **MR. THOMPSON:** Please seat this juror.

20          **THE CLERK:** Have a seat in the jury box on the

21 left.. Thank you.

22          Juror No. 114, Rita McCracken. (White female.

23          What say you to the State?

24          **MR. MILLER:** Please present the juror.

25          **THE CLERK:** What say you to the defense?

1           **MR. THOMPSON:** Please seat this juror.

2           **THE CLERK:** Have a seat in the jury box to my left.

3 Thank you.

4           Juror No. 182, Anthony J. Vangelas. (White male.

5           What say you to the State?

6           **MR. MILLER:** Please present the juror.

7           **THE CLERK:** What say you to the defense?

8           **MR. THOMPSON:** Please excuse this juror.

9           **THE CLERK:** Please return to your seat. Thank you.

10          Juror No. 79, Savannah M. Harris. (White female.

11          What say you to the State?

12          **MR. MILLER:** Please present this juror.

13          **THE CLERK:** What say you to the defense?

14          **MR. THOMPSON:** Please seat Ms. Harris.

15          **THE CLERK:** Please have a seat in the jury box on

16 the left.

17          Juror No. 93, Douglas G. Jackson. (White male.

18          What say you to the State?

19          **MR. MILLER:** Please present Mr. Jackson.

20          **THE CLERK:** What say you to the defense?

21          **MR. THOMPSON:** Please seat Mr. Jackson.

22          **THE CLERK:** Please have a seat in the jury box.

23          Juror No. 10, Joshua B. Beard. (White male.

24          What say you to the State?

25          **MR. MILLER:** Please present the juror.

1 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?  
2 MR. THOMPSON: Please seat this juror.  
3 THE CLERK: Please have a seat in the jury box on  
4 the left.  
5 Juror No. 113, Robert F. McClearen. (White male.  
6 What say you to the State?  
7 MR. MILLER: Please present the juror.  
8 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?  
9 MR. THOMPSON: Please excuse this juror.  
10 THE CLERK: Please return to your seat.  
11 The State has exhausted one strike, the defense,  
12 five.  
13 Juror No. 155, Wendy M. Sanderson. (White female.  
14 What say you to the State?  
15 MR. MILLER: Please present the juror.  
16 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?  
17 MR. THOMPSON: Please excuse this juror.  
18 THE CLERK: Please return to your seat. Thank you.  
19 Juror No. 192, Houston R. Williams. (White male.  
20 What say you to the State?  
21 MR. MILLER: Please excuse this juror.  
22 THE CLERK: Please return to your seat, sir. Thank  
23 you.  
24 Juror No. 60, Deborah Flippen. (White female.  
25 What say you to the State?

1 MR. MILLER: Please present the juror.

2 THE CLERK: What say you to the State -- I'm sorry  
3 the defense?

4 MR. THOMPSON: Please seat this juror.

5 THE CLERK: Please have a seat in the jury box to  
6 my left, please. Thank you.

7 Juror No. 127 Cheryl P. Morse. (White female.

8 What say you to the State?

9 MR. MILLER: Please present the juror.

10 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?

11 MR. THOMPSON: Please seat this juror.

12 THE CLERK: Please have a seat in the jury box on  
13 the left, please.

14 Juror No. 133. Santos Pagan. (Hispanic male.

15 What say you to the State?

16 MR. MILLER: Please present the juror.

17 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?

18 MR. THOMPSON: Please seat in juror.

19 THE CLERK: Please have a seat in the jury box to  
20 my left.

21 THE COURT: Let me have two alternates. Two and  
22 one.

23 THE CLERK: Juror No. 34, Marion Carter. (Black  
24 male.

25 What say you to the State?

1 MR. MILLER: Please present the juror.  
2 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?  
3 MR. THOMPSON: Please seat this juror.  
4 THE CLERK: Please have a seat in the jury box to  
5 my left, please.  
6 Alternate No. 2. Juror No. 152, Alfred V. Russo.  
7 (White male.  
8 What say you to the State?  
9 MR. MILLER: Please present this juror.  
10 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?  
11 MR. THOMPSON: Please excuse this juror.  
12 THE COURT: Please return to your seat, sir.  
13 THE CLERK: Juror No. 86, Jeremy R. Helmick.  
14 (White male.  
15 What say you to the State?  
16 MR. MILLER: Please present this juror.  
17 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?  
18 MR. THOMPSON: Please excuse this juror.  
19 THE CLERK: Please return to your seat, sir. Thank  
20 you.  
21 Juror No. 27, Linda H. Calhoun. (White female.  
22 What say you to the State?  
23 MR. MILLER: Please present the juror.  
24 THE CLERK: What say you to the defense?  
25 MR. THOMPSON: Please seat this juror.

1           **THE CLERK:** Please have a seat in the jury box on  
2 the left.

3           **THE COURT:** Any motions by the State or the  
4 defendant in connection to the selection of the jury?

5           **MR. MILLER:** None from the State, Your Honor.

6           **MR. THOMPSON:** Nothing from defense, Your Honor.

7           **THE COURT:** Ladies and gentlemen, you should have  
8 on your sheet that was given to you or mailed to you, a  
9 number to call back. Please call back after six for  
10 instructions. If I do not see you again, I thank you for  
11 coming. We cannot run court without jurors being ready,  
12 willing, and able to serve. So I thank you and have a  
13 wonderful day.

14           Everybody else remain seated.

15           You jurors are free to go.

16           (WHEREUPON the jury panel left the courtroom.)

17           **THE COURT:** Ladies and gentlemen, we're going to  
18 start at ten o'clock in the morning. Number one, we have a  
19 witness that can't be here until tomorrow. The other  
20 reason is we have some pretrial things that we have to take  
21 care of and it will probably take us an hour to do it and I  
22 don't want you sitting back there waiting on me. Instead  
23 we want to get all that out of the way.

24           When you get here in the morning at ten, we'll be  
25 ready to go. Normally, we will provide you with some hot

1 coffee and either a sausage biscuit or fruit or donuts.

2 What's your pleasure.

3 **THE JUROR:** Coffee and fruit.

4 **THE COURT:** Guys, you got the fruit. I guarantee  
5 you my guy in the green shirt doesn't want fruit.

6 Mr. Whittle can you get us some bananas and peaches  
7 and nectarines and kiwi? Get the normal.

8 Okay. We'll have you some hot coffee and fresh  
9 fruit tomorrow and we'll get into the trial of the case and  
10 see how far we get and move along very quickly. I look  
11 forward to working with each one of you. I'd ask you not  
12 to go home tonight and do any independent research on  
13 burglary or anything else.

14 I don't think anybody would probably try to talk to  
15 you about the case, if they do, just tell them you're on  
16 the jury. If they insist on talking, just get their names  
17 and I'll deal with it.

18 I look forward to working with you. You can step  
19 back with Ms. Barbara, she'll show you where to return in  
20 the morning and we'll start right at ten o'clock.

21 Therefore, if you want some fruit and some hot coffee, be  
22 here a little ahead of time because you can't bring it into  
23 the courtroom.

24 Everybody else remain seated. Thank you. Y'all  
25 have a pleasant evening.

1 (WHEREUPON the jury left the courtroom at 3:04  
2 p.m.)

3 THE COURT: Okay. Let the record reflect that we  
4 had a side bar on Juror No. 67, Edward Girardeau. Defense  
5 moved to strike for cause. They overheard him make some  
6 comments out in the hall that would indicate that he  
7 perhaps could not be fair and impartial, that he would say  
8 yes so that we move along fast, basically is what they  
9 heard him say. There was no objection by the State.

10 Is that correct, gentlemen?

11 MR. MILLER: That's correct, Your Honor.

12 MR. THOMPSON: That's correct, Your Honor.

13 THE COURT: All right. And there was no motions as  
14 far as the jury went. So what do we have left to get ready  
15 so we can start right at ten o'clock in the morning?

16 MR. MILLER: Judge, the State will be ready to  
17 proceed. There are no statements, no pretrial motions that  
18 I'm aware of.

19 MR. THOMPSON: There are no pretrial motions, Your  
20 Honor, from the defense.

21 THE COURT: And this is a burglary first with two  
22 priors. Have you moved -- are there strikes involved?

23 MR. MILLER: No, sir, it's not a strike-out case.  
24 I did intend to discuss with Mr. Thompson a stipulation as  
25 to the record, just to keep us from having to call clerk

1 personnel. They are Aiken convictions and I don't think --

2 MR. THOMPSON: We haven't discussed it, but we're  
3 prepared to do that.

4 THE COURT: Very well. What's the offer on the  
5 table?

6 MR. MILLER: Fifteen years, Your Honor.

7 MR. THOMPSON: It's a burglary second, violent.

8 THE COURT: He's being tried for burg first with  
9 two prior? What's his record?

10 MR. MILLER: He's got --

11 THE COURT: I know he's got two prior burglaries.

12 MR. MILLER: He does, Your Honor.

13 MR. THOMPSON: He is also, Your Honor, currently on  
14 probation.

15 THE COURT: For what?

16 MR. THOMPSON: For burg second.

17 THE COURT: And what was that sentence?

18 MR. THOMPSON: Twelve -- it was a sentence to four  
19 active, eight suspended.

20 THE COURT: So he's looking at eight if he's  
21 violated?

22 MR. THOMPSON: That's correct, Your Honor.  
23 Although those would be nonviolent years is my  
24 understanding.

25 THE COURT: I understand. Well --

1           **MR. MILLER:** He's got a number of petit larceny,  
2 criminal domestic violence, simple assault and battery,  
3 burglary second, possession of drug paraphernalia, burglary  
4 second again in 2009.

5           **MR. THOMPSON:** That's my understanding as well.

6           **THE COURT:** Well, I assume you've advised your  
7 client burglary carries -- what is it --

8           **MR. MILLER:** Fifteen to life, Your Honor.

9           **MR. THOMPSON:** That's correct.

10          **THE COURT:** Fifteen to life.

11          **MR. THOMPSON:** Fifteen and it's a no parole  
12 offense, so it's 85 percent.

13          **THE COURT:** 85 percent and the State's willing to  
14 plea him to burg second, which is not an 85 percent.

15          **MR. THOMPSON:** That's my understanding, Your Honor.

16          **MR. MILLER:** Burg second, nonviolent would carry  
17 zero to ten. State hasn't -- violent would be zero to  
18 fifteen.

19          **THE COURT:** What y'all -- violent?

20          **MR. MILLER:** Yes, sir. Fifteen negotiated on a  
21 burg second violent was the offer.

22          **THE COURT:** That's not an 85 percent and I'd run  
23 them concurrent.

24          **MR. THOMPSON:** I'll discuss it with my client  
25 again, Your Honor.

1           **THE COURT:** I'm not -- no, I'm just talking out  
2 loud.

3           **MR. THOMPSON:** Yes, sir.

4           **THE COURT:** All right. Anything else for this  
5 afternoon?

6           **MR. MILLER:** We have a plea, Your Honor, but we're  
7 waiting on Mr. Anderson to get here so that can be done.  
8 He was supposed to be on his way.

9           **THE COURT:** Mr. Pearson, anything you need to ask  
10 me? You okay? Any questions?

11          **THE DEFENDANT:** No, sir.

12          **THE COURT:** Okay. See you in the morning. All  
13 right?

14          **THE DEFENDANT:** All right, sir.

15          **THE COURT:** Thank you. We'll stand at ease.

16                 (WHEREUPON the case was in recess until the  
17 following morning.)

18          **THE COURT:** Is the State ready to proceed?

19          **MR. MILLER:** State's ready to proceed, Your Honor.

20          **THE COURT:** Bring the defendant out.

21                 You ready?

22          **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, I have one issue I need  
23 to make you aware of. I have subpoenaed --

24          **THE COURT:** Let's get your client out here.

25          **MR. THOMPSON:** Yes, sir.

1 (WHEREUPON there was a pause in the proceedings.)

2 (WHEREUPON the defendant entered the courtroom.)

3 **THE COURT:** Yes, sir?

4 **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, may it please the Court,  
5 I just wanted to make the Court aware that I had subpoenaed  
6 a -- a rebuttal witness just in case one of those witnesses  
7 for the State says something he might say. We had  
8 subpoenaed him while he was incarcerated at the Aiken  
9 County Detention Center. Last week he pleaded before this  
10 Court and I made him aware again that he was under subpoena  
11 to be here.

12 **THE COURT:** Where is he? I mean is he in the  
13 department of corrections?

14 **MR. THOMPSON:** He is not in the department of  
15 corrections. He is on the street. And I have had my  
16 investigator looking for him yesterday and I had my  
17 investigator looking for him today. This may not be an  
18 issue, depending on what the State's witness says.

19 **THE COURT:** What do you want me to do?

20 **MR. THOMPSON:** At some point in time, I just wanted  
21 to make the Court aware that I may be moving for a  
22 continuance in order to try --

23 **THE COURT:** I'm not -- I'll issue a bench warrant  
24 for him this morning. He's subpoenaed to be here now?

25 **MR. THOMPSON:** He is, Your Honor.

1 THE COURT: Who is it.

2 MR. MILLER: His name is Rogier, Your Honor. We  
3 can look it up and find out what he got sentenced to. He  
4 might be on probation.

5 MR. THOMPSON: He got time served.

6 MR. MILLER: Oh, he got time served.

7 THE COURT: Well --

8 MR. THOMPSON: I would ask the Court to issue a  
9 bench warrant.

10 THE COURT: I can get you one real quick and turn  
11 it over to law enforcement.

12 MR. THOMPSON: Very fine.

13 THE COURT: Anything else?

14 MR. THOMPSON: Nothing from the defense, Your  
15 Honor.

16 THE COURT: Yes, sir, Mr. Defendant?

17 THE DEFENDANT: Can I speak?

18 MR. THOMPSON: You may.

19 THE DEFENDANT: Your Honor --

20 THE COURT: Yes, sir?

21 THE DEFENDANT: I got eight witnesses I asked to  
22 get subpoenaed to court.

23 THE COURT: Yes, sir.

24 THE DEFENDANT: And I -- they said that I only had  
25 two yesterday. I have not talked to my attorney but maybe

1 thirty minutes the whole time I've seen him and I'm going  
2 to be on trial for my life.

3 THE COURT: No, sir, you're not on trial for your  
4 life.

5 What is the charge? Burglary first?

6 MR. MILLER: Burglary first, Your Honor.

7 THE COURT: You could conceivably get it.

8 MR. THOMPSON: And Your Honor, for the record, in  
9 order to not be subject to allegations of having cumulative  
10 testimony, I believe that there are only two witnesses that  
11 are really necessary for what Mr. Pearson's talking about  
12 and we have subpoenaed both of those witnesses.

13 THE COURT: Mr. Pearson, your lawyers are seasoned,  
14 experienced, and if the witnesses are just going to repeat  
15 what the other witnesses said, then they would not be  
16 allowed to testify anyway under Rule 403. So I'm going to  
17 trust his judgment. Thank you.

18 THE DEFENDANT: Can I say one more thing?

19 THE COURT: You certainly may.

20 THE DEFENDANT: He's told me I had no chance of  
21 winning my case.

22 THE COURT: Well, I don't know.

23 THE DEFENDANT: I don't -- I don't feel like I'm  
24 being represented right.

25 THE COURT: He certainly has a right to his opinion

1 as to your likelihood of success in the case. A lot of  
2 times when I was a lawyer, I told my clients, I don't think  
3 you stand a chance of winning, the evidence is overwhelming  
4 against you. A lot of times that is the case.  
5 Unfortunately more times likely than not, that's the case  
6 and that's why it's part of his duty is to try to reach  
7 a -- reach some kind of compromise with the solicitor's  
8 office to get you the best deal possible. You're looking  
9 at a minimum of fifteen years up to life, doing 85 percent  
10 of whatever I gave you. He's worked out a deal with the  
11 State. The State had offered you at one time a plea to  
12 burglary second violent, which is up to fifteen years and  
13 you would do 85 percent of whatever that was. And you've  
14 got a probation violation on top of that. And I think I  
15 mentioned a lot of that to you yesterday.

16 It's not unusual for a lawyer, after having  
17 assessed the facts and applying those facts to the law to  
18 tell you your chances are slim. He would not be doing his  
19 job if he tried to build up in your mind that you were  
20 going to walk out of here. He knows what the facts are.  
21 He knows the case is difficult. He has to tell you that if  
22 that's his opinion.

23 Anything else?

24 **THE DEFENDANT:** No, sir. I --

25 **THE COURT:** I mean, you know what the facts are as

1 well as he does. I assume that offer has been withdrawn.

2 MR. MILLER: It has, Your Honor.

3 THE COURT: Would the State allow him to plead to  
4 burglary second, violent?

5 MR. MILLER: No, sir.

6 THE COURT: Thank you. Well, what's on the table  
7 now if you want to plead straight up to burglary in the  
8 first-degree, you're looking at a minimum of fifteen years  
9 to life; and if you plead guilty, obviously, I would take  
10 into consideration the fact that you have admitted your  
11 guilt and you're not making the State go through a trial.  
12 That's up to you. The jurors are here, we're ready to  
13 proceed.

14 Anything else?

15 THE DEFENDANT: No, sir. Your Honor, I don't think  
16 I've been getting anything but a run around. That's all  
17 I've done. They charged me with burg first, they charged  
18 my son with burglary second and they give him probation and  
19 they charged me with burglary first. I don't understand  
20 that, Your Honor.

21 THE COURT: I can't explain that to you.

22 Anything else you want to tell me?

23 THE DEFENDANT: No, sir.

24 THE COURT: Bring the jury in.

25 (WHEREUPON the jury entered the courtroom at 10:07

1 a.m.)

2 **THE COURT:** Mr. Miller, y'all approach for a  
3 second.

4 (WHEREUPON, there was a bench conference out of the  
5 hearing of the jury and the Court Reporter.)

6 **THE COURT:** Good morning. Everybody eat their  
7 fruit? You know the one person that I thought would not  
8 want fruit, he was the first one here. Was there any left  
9 for all of y'all?

10 The first thing we have to do to get started is you  
11 have to be sworn in once again. So please stand and raise  
12 your right hand.

13 (WHEREUPON the jury was sworn at 10:10 a.m.)

14 **THE CLERK:** You may be seated.

15 **OPENING REMARKS BY THE COURT**

16 **THE COURT:** Ladies and gentlemen, as I have told  
17 you when we selected the jury that in this case,  
18 Mr. William R. Pearson has been charged and indicted for  
19 the offense of burglary in the first-degree. Please bear  
20 in mind the fact that he's been arrested, charged, and  
21 indicted is not evidence in the case. He has pled not  
22 guilty to these charges and under the constitution,  
23 obviously, he is presumed to be innocent of the charges  
24 unless the State is able to prove each and every element of  
25 the offense as outlined in the indictment to you beyond a

1 reasonable doubt. And I will explain to you the elements  
2 of the offense of burglary in the first-degree as we go  
3 along.

4 Now, as I said, the burden is on the State to prove  
5 his guilt to you beyond a reasonable doubt. That is the  
6 standard of proof in a criminal case. And we sometimes  
7 illustrate that by the scales of justice, if these were the  
8 scales of justice. If we were trying an automobile wreck  
9 case or a medical malpractice case or a legal malpractice  
10 case or a breach of contract, that's a civil case. The  
11 parties come in on equal footing and the scales are in this  
12 manner, they're equal.

13 Well, for the plaintiff, the person bringing the  
14 suit to prevail, they have to prove their case by the  
15 preponderance or greater weight of the evidence. They have  
16 to tip the scales ever so slightly in their favor, the  
17 scales of evidence, the weight of evidence.

18 In a criminal case, because the constitution says  
19 that everyone is presumed innocent until proven guilty  
20 beyond a reasonable doubt, they come into the courtroom  
21 with the scales of justice tipped heavily in their favor  
22 and for the State to prove his guilt to you beyond a  
23 reasonable doubt, they have to tip the scales in that  
24 manner. So the burden of proof in a criminal case is much  
25 more than in a civil case.

1 Now, the way we try cases is this: Since the State  
2 has the burden of proof, they will put up their case first.  
3 They will call their witnesses first. After they've  
4 presented their testimony and/or exhibits, the defendant  
5 has the opportunity to present his side if he chooses to  
6 put up any defense. Once we complete all of the testimony,  
7 then the lawyers will make their closing arguments, and  
8 then I will instruct you or charge you on the law of the  
9 case.

10 Prior to all of that, the lawyers will have an  
11 opportunity to make an opening statement. Please bear in  
12 mind that the opening statements and the closing statement  
13 or closing arguments, that is not evidence in the case.  
14 That is simply what the lawyers will argue that the  
15 evidence shows in their favor. The opening statements is  
16 sort of a road map as to what they intend to prove or they  
17 intend to show you.

18 As I told you yesterday when we were selecting the  
19 jury, you and I have separate functions to perform. My  
20 job, I am the judge of the law in the case and my position  
21 makes me the judge of the law in the case. If you come  
22 into the courtroom with some preconceived idea about what  
23 the law is or what it should be and it does not agree with  
24 what I tell you, you have to set aside that preconceived  
25 idea and accept the law as I give it to you, I charge or I

1 tell or I instruct you what the law is in the case.

2 My other main function in the trial of the case is  
3 to rule on the admissibility of evidence. The lawyers on  
4 both side have to ask questions that conform with our rules  
5 of evidence. And 99 percent of the time they do, perhaps a  
6 hundred percent of the time. Every now and then you may  
7 hear an objection. But once the testimony is admitted into  
8 the trial of a case, then you twelve people, acting  
9 collectively as one, you are the most important judge in  
10 the case. You are the judges of the facts of the case. So  
11 as I told you when we selected a jury, you use your common  
12 sense to judge the credibility or the believability of the  
13 witnesses and when you determine what the true facts are in  
14 the case, you apply it to the law as I give it to you and  
15 you'll be in a position to determine whether or not the  
16 State has proven their case beyond a reasonable doubt to  
17 you.

18 So that's sort of your function and my function.

19 I try to run an efficient courtroom. I try to  
20 start on time. I try to keep the lawyers moving, but on  
21 the upside of the coin, I'm not trying to run a race up  
22 here, so if at any time during the trial of the case you  
23 become uncomfortable, you need a bathroom break, you need  
24 to just go stretch your legs or get something to drink or  
25 whatever, just get uncomfortable, raise your hand and I

1 will make sure any needs you have are met. We will go  
2 until about 11:30, take a morning break and then come back  
3 and probably go until about one o'clock and we'll see where  
4 we are at that time. I will either let y'all walk down to  
5 the Bowery for lunch or we can order in just depending on  
6 where we are with the trial of the case. But we'll make  
7 that decision around the first break.

8 I will instruct you every time that we take a break  
9 or break for the evening to please do not discuss the case,  
10 do not start any type of deliberations. It is improper to  
11 do that until all of the evidence has been introduced in  
12 the trial, the lawyers have made their final arguments and  
13 I've instructed you on the law.

14 I will also ask that when he take our first break  
15 that the twelve of you, my regular jurors, if you would  
16 select a foreperson from the twelve of you to serve as the  
17 spokesperson for the jury. That's the person if y'all have  
18 any problems or any questions, they will present it to me.  
19 You head up the deliberations at the conclusion of the  
20 trial. So please try to select somebody for that job.

21 I think you'll find this to be interesting. This  
22 is not court TV. This is the real world. I've been doing  
23 this a long time, as I told you yesterday, over  
24 thirty-eight years. And you know, we look around the world  
25 today and we see all the craziness that's going on, but in

1 our country, if you are accused of committing a crime, you  
2 have the right to come into this courtroom before twelve  
3 citizens from the community. And y'all are asked to decide  
4 what the facts are and apply the law. It's not some  
5 dictator, it's not some firing squad, it's not some  
6 revolutionary army like you see so much in other parts of  
7 the world.

8 This is the best system of justice that's ever been  
9 devised and you're a part of it today. So I ask that you  
10 pay close attention. I think you'll enjoy your experience  
11 and I look forward to working with you.

12 Any objections to my opening remarks by the State?

13 MR. MILLER: None, Your Honor.

14 THE COURT: By the defendant?

15 MR. THOMPSON: Nothing from the defense, Your  
16 Honor.

17 THE COURT: Thank you. Mr. Miller?

18 MR. MILLER: Thank you, may it please the Court?

19 THE COURT: Yes, sir.

20 **OPENING STATEMENTS**

21 MR. MILLER: Mr. Thompson, ladies and gentlemen of  
22 the jury, we're here today on an important case. It's  
23 important to the State; it's important to the victim who is  
24 coming here now; it's important to Mr. Thompson and his  
25 client, Mr. Pearson. And I point that out to you to tell

1 you this: The judge made mention to the TV trials. This  
2 isn't CSI. This isn't NCIS. This isn't Law and Order.  
3 But it's also not going to drag on for days and days and  
4 days. You are going to hear testimony from witnesses put  
5 up by the State who are going to tell you why Officer  
6 Spires suspected something was going on, what he did to  
7 follow up on those suspicions; how it was discovered that a  
8 burglary had occurred at [REDACTED] and what the officer did  
9 following up on that information to make arrests in the  
10 case.

11 And one of the people that you're going to hear  
12 from is Mr. Pearson's son. So let's get this out of the  
13 way for the sake of everybody's clarity: The defendant is  
14 William Ralph Pearson. We will refer to him as the  
15 defendant. We will refer to him as Ralph Pearson, we may  
16 refer to him as the father. When we say any of those three  
17 things, we're talking about the defendant sitting over  
18 there. Okay?

19 His son is William James Pearson. So he may be  
20 referred to by someone as James, the son, Jimmy or Junior,  
21 but they're the only two parties in this thing. They're  
22 the only two people that were accused of breaking into that  
23 house.

24 And you're going to probably hear from Mr. Thompson  
25 a good bit about the fact that on the day of the arrest,

1 James Pearson lied to the police. James Pearson tried to  
2 tell Officer Spires that all of the stuff that Officer  
3 Spires had caught him and his father with came from some  
4 place besides [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Well, that was a lie. Ralph  
5 Pearson, Mr. Pearson, the father, is actually the person  
6 who told the police where the break-in had occurred. He  
7 showed it to them. He took them to where the burglary  
8 happened.

9 Ladies and gentlemen, the only one way he knew  
10 where the burglary happened, he was there when it happened.  
11 You'll hear about that. I just don't want there to be any  
12 confusion. You're going to hear that James Pearson, the  
13 son, pled guilty to his burglary charge and he's going to  
14 be up here testifying for the State today because when he  
15 looked at all of the evidence that the State had, he knew  
16 he couldn't lie anymore. So he pled guilty and he's here  
17 today.

18 This is going to be a quick trial. Quick is a  
19 relative term. Quick for attorneys -- a quick trial for an  
20 attorney can seem like a long trial for a jury. I  
21 understand that. We're going to try to be as efficient as  
22 we can with you. In addition to being the judge of the  
23 law, Judge Early is also pretty strict on us about being as  
24 efficient as we possibly can. But we will do our best to  
25 be as efficient as we possibly can.

1           But yesterday, we went through a process that took  
2 almost two hours. We went through the process where y'all  
3 each stood up and you told us what you did, whether or not  
4 you were married. You told us where you worked, if your  
5 husband or wife worked. Then after that, the judge went  
6 through a long list of questions. And those were all to  
7 qualify you as jurors. And you were all obviously  
8 qualified because you're here today. Then the judge went  
9 through the series of questions about this incident and  
10 there's a reason that the judge does that. That is done to  
11 make sure that you can be fair jurors. That is to make  
12 sure that you don't come into this jury box with  
13 preconceived notions about this case.

14           But, ladies and gentlemen, I want you to consider  
15 the one that the judge didn't ask you yesterday. The judge  
16 did not ask, is there anybody in the jury panel who can use  
17 common sense because common sense is something that you're  
18 supposed to bring into this jury box. Common sense and  
19 rationality is something that you were supposed to use when  
20 you perform your duties as the judges of the facts. We  
21 want our jurors to have common sense. And, ladies and  
22 gentlemen, I submit to you that at the end of the trial,  
23 you're going to be able to take the evidence that you have  
24 heard and you're going to be able to go back into that jury  
25 room and you are going to apply your good common sense to

1 everything that you've seen and everything that you've  
2 heard and you're going to be able to find William Pearson,  
3 William Ralph Pearson, Mr. Pearson, guilty of burglary in  
4 the first-degree because when you apply the facts that you  
5 know beyond a reasonable doubt -- when you apply those  
6 facts to the law that the judge is going to give to you,  
7 there's only going to be one conclusion and that conclusion  
8 is going to be guilty.

9 I thank you for your time. Please pay attention to  
10 Mr. Thompson. Thank you.

11 MR. THOMPSON: Your Honor, may it please the Court?

12 THE COURT: Yes, sir.

13 MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Miller, Mr. Grimes.

14 MR. MILLER: Yes, sir.

15 MR. THOMPSON: Don't get nervous because I'm going  
16 to be real brief. Good morning. I'm Barry Thompson. I  
17 represent Ralph -- I like what he said during this trial,  
18 I'm going to probably refer to the daddy as Ralph and the  
19 son as James. That way we won't have any confusion from  
20 anybody. Ralph is my client who's -- he's the defendant  
21 here. Mr. Andy Smith is with the public defender's office.  
22 He's here with me, helping me today.

23 This case is about a burglary. Now, there's no  
24 doubt that Mr. James committed this burglary. He's already  
25 pleaded guilty to that. You are going to -- this is an

1 adversarial system. What we have, is we have two different  
2 sides, different lawyers that kind of put together two  
3 different viewpoints and y'all decide what the truth is and  
4 whether somebody's guilty or not. Mr. Miller and  
5 Mr. Grimes are very fine lawyers. I'm sure they'll do a  
6 wonderful job. Their job is to come here and tell you all  
7 the reasons why Ralph's guilty. As you might surmise, at  
8 some point in this trial, I'm going to come up and I'm  
9 going to give you reasons why he's not and why I think he  
10 probably committed a crime, but that he probably didn't  
11 commit the crime that we're talking about here today,  
12 probably didn't commit the crime of burglary and why you  
13 should find him not guilty of burglary.

14 But more than anything else, this morning -- I'll  
15 get to that later. This morning in my opening statement,  
16 what I really wanted to ask you to do is this: In our  
17 adversarial system, one side has to go first and it's the  
18 prosecution. The prosecution's going to go first and  
19 they're going to present their case. And all I want to ask  
20 you at this point in time is just to be able to keep an  
21 open mind and give us the fairness of not making up your  
22 mind about the case until you've heard both sides. I know  
23 you will and I appreciate your time. Thank you.

24 **THE COURT:** Mr. Miller, you may call your first  
25 case -- witness.

1           **MR. GRIMES:** State calls Officer Spires.

2                               DETROIT SPIRES,

3           having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

4           **THE CLERK:** Have a seat in the witness box. State  
5 your full name for the Court, spelling your last.

6           **THE WITNESS:** I'm Corporal Detroit Spires, Spires.

7                               **DIRECT EXAMINATION**

8           **BY MR. GRIMES:**

9           **Q**           Officer Spires, by way of introduction, can you  
10 tell us who you work for?

11           **A**           I work for the New Ellenton Police Department.

12           **Q**           How long have you worked for New Ellenton Police  
13 Department?

14           **A**           Just short of five years.

15           **Q**           Just short of five years. When you work for a law  
16 enforcement agency -- well, did you go to criminal justice  
17 academy?

18           **A**           I did.

19           **Q**           Okay. And is that law-enforcement-specific  
20 training?

21           **A**           Yes, sir.

22           **Q**           Is it required for the position that you have now?

23           **A**           Yes, sir.

24           **Q**           Okay. And were you working with the New Ellenton  
25 Police Department in May of this year?

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

- 1 A Yes, sir.
- 2 Q Okay. Specifically on -- well, do you know William  
3 James Pearson?
- 4 A Yes, sir.
- 5 Q Do you know where he lives?
- 6 A Yes, sir.
- 7 Q And where does he live?
- 8 A He lives at [REDACTED].
- 9 Q [REDACTED] Avenue?
- 10 A Yes, sir.
- 11 Q And on May 28th, 2012, did you have an opportunity  
12 to go to [REDACTED] Street, [REDACTED] Avenue?
- 13 A I did.
- 14 Q Okay. And what was that in relation to?
- 15 A I went there on a disturbance call earlier that  
16 day.
- 17 Q And did you see James Pearson there?
- 18 A I did.
- 19 Q I'm going to refer to him as James Pearson.  
20 Actually -- hopefully that's not going to confuse you?
- 21 A Not at all.
- 22 Q Okay. Did you see James Pearson there at [REDACTED]  
23 Avenue?
- 24 A I did.
- 25 Q Okay. And what was James Pearson doing there when

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 you were there?

2 A The reason I was there was for a disturbance.

3 We -- James and the neighbor across the street -- I spoke  
4 to James and he was near his vehicle or the vehicle that  
5 was in the yard, which was a Mercury Cougar. I spoke to  
6 him about the disturbance and we cleared that call up.

7 Q Was he working on that vehicle?

8 A He was inside of it doing something inside of it.

9 Q Did you have an opportunity to see how that vehicle  
10 looked at the time?

11 A I did.

12 Q Okay. Do you know what time of day that was?

13 A I believe it was around midday, twelve.

14 Q Were you there a long time?

15 A We were there for approximately thirty minutes.

16 Q And what did you do when you left that residence?

17 A Went back on patrol in the city limits of New  
18 Ellenton.

19 Q Did you have an opportunity to notice that vehicle  
20 later in the day?

21 A I did.

22 Q About how much longer -- about how long after you  
23 were at the house did you notice the vehicle?

24 A It was no more than forty-five minutes later I  
25 noticed the vehicle.

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 Q Did you notice anything different about the vehicle  
2 at that time?

3 A I did. The vehicle had a lot of items inside of  
4 it. The trunk was propped open with an item hanging out  
5 the back of it when I passed the vehicle as it came forward  
6 me on Old Whiskey Road.

7 Q Did you have an opportunity to notice what type of  
8 stuff was in the vehicle?

9 A Nothing that I could specifically detail out. It's  
10 just that the vehicle was loaded down. I noticed that  
11 James was sitting in the center of the front of the vehicle  
12 and Mr. Ralph Pearson was driving the vehicle.

13 Q When you say in the center of the front, does that  
14 vehicle have a bench seat in the front?

15 A No, sir. It has a center console.

16 Q So he was sitting on the center console?

17 A Yes, sir.

18 Q Who was driving the vehicle?

19 A The defendant.

20 Q Ralph Pearson?

21 A Yes, sir.

22 Q Okay. Did this vehicle pique your interest?

23 A Yes, sir, it did because the vehicle was empty the  
24 first time I saw it and now it was loaded down full of  
25 stuff. So I turned around and followed the vehicle as it

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 proceeded back toward the residence on [REDACTED] Avenue.

2 Q You mentioned that James Pearson lives on [REDACTED]  
3 Avenue. Does Ralph Pearson live there?

4 A Yes, sir.

5 Q Who else lives there?

6 A I believe Mr. Pearson's significant other and her  
7 children. James Pearson's significant other.

8 Q And this vehicle that you were following, did it  
9 actually pull into the residence at [REDACTED] Avenue?

10 A It did.

11 Q Okay. Did you pull into the residence on [REDACTED]  
12 Avenue?

13 A I did.

14 Q Who did you talk to when you got there?

15 A When I -- the vehicle actually drove in behind the  
16 residence and parked, which was another odd thing to me.  
17 When I exited my vehicle, Mr. James Pearson's significant  
18 other came out of the residence and I asked her what was in  
19 the vehicle and she stated to me that she didn't know and  
20 we both proceeded around to the back of the residence when  
21 I observed Mr. Ralph Pearson pulling a Chargoal grill  
22 smoker out of the trunk of the vehicle and Mr. James  
23 Pearson was just now attempting to get out of the vehicle.

24 Q So when you noticed the vehicle, Ralph Pearson was  
25 pulling a grill out of it. James wasn't out of the vehicle

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 yet?

2 A James hadn't made it out of the vehicle yet.

3 Q Did you ask where the charcoal grill came from?

4 A I asked both Pearsons where the items came from.

5 Mr. Ralph Pearson didn't really say much. He didn't say  
6 anything at all. Mr. James Pearson kind of stammered and  
7 stuttered and advised me that it came from a guy.

8 Q Ralph Pearson didn't mention anything about --

9 A No, sir.

10 Q What did he do when you asked?

11 A He just pretty much looked at his son.

12 Q Did that answer from James satisfy your curiosity?

13 A No, sir, it didn't. And the look of shock on both  
14 of them's face kind of was another red flag.

15 Q How did you follow up on that with James?

16 A I asked James where it came from and he said, Well,  
17 I bought it from a guy. And I asked him what's the guy's  
18 name. Well, I just know him as and I can't remember at  
19 this time the name he gave me. It was just a first name.  
20 I said, Well does he live here? Where does he live at.  
21 And he kind of thought for a second and finally gave me,  
22 Well, a house around the corner.

23 So I said okay. I asked him, Well, is the  
24 gentleman home today. Oh, well, he's not home today. And  
25 I said, Well, when did you buy the stuff. He said, Well,

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 you know I buy this stuff to sell at the flea market and I  
2 bought it about a month ago.

3 I said so it took you a month to go pick up stuff  
4 that you bought and this gentleman is not home. And at  
5 that time I contacted dispatch and asked them to have  
6 another unit en route to assist me with it and that's when  
7 Chief Rushton from Jackson responded that he would be en  
8 route to my location.

9 Q. What agency is Chief Rushton with?

10 A He works for the Jackson Police Department.

11 Q And did he actually respond to that location?

12 A He did.

13 Q What did you do when he got there?

14 A When Chief Rushton arrived, I asked Mr. James  
15 Pearson to take me around to the residence that he was  
16 referring to while Chief Rushton secured the scene and kept  
17 an eye on Mr. Ralph Pearson. We went around to a residence  
18 at [REDACTED] Avenue.

19 Q When you say we, was this --

20 A Myself and Mr. James Pearson --

21 Q Okay.

22 A -- went around to the residence at [REDACTED]  
23 Avenue.

24 Q And what happened when you got there?

25 A When we got there, Mr. Pearson advised me that's

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 where I got the stuff from. I looked and I'm familiar with  
2 this residence because I've been there on several calls  
3 before. The residence -- the lady that owns the residence  
4 was sitting on the front porch and Mr. Pearson stayed in  
5 the back seat of my car while I went and spoke with her. I  
6 asked her if she was familiar with Mr. Pearson. She said  
7 she knew him, but she had not sold him anything nor had he  
8 taken anything from her house that day. She had been at  
9 home all day.

10 Q Did you ask Mr. Pearson about that response from  
11 her?

12 A I didn't at that time.

13 Q Where was Ralph Pearson during this?

14 A He was with Chief Rushton back at the [REDACTED] Avenue  
15 residence.

16 Q Did you get a call from Chief Rushton?

17 A I did once -- once I returned back, Chief Rushton  
18 decided that he would take the defendant to see if they  
19 could locate the house, the same house -- he took him to  
20 the same house. A short time later when I was standing by  
21 the [REDACTED] Avenue residence, Chief Rushton called me on the  
22 phone and told me I needed to come to [REDACTED]  
23 because he believed they had a break in.

24 Q Did you go to [REDACTED] Avenue?

25 A I did.

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

- 1 Q Okay. And what was that address again?
- 2 A [REDACTED] Avenue.
- 3 Q [REDACTED] Avenue. Is [REDACTED] Avenue in New Ellenton?
- 4 A Yes, sir.
- 5 Q And that's in Aiken County?
- 6 A Yes, sir.
- 7 Q Who was at the house when you got there?
- 8 A When I arrived, Chief Rushton was standing by his  
9 patrol vehicle with Mr. Ralph Pearson.
- 10 Q Ralph Pearson was in the patrol?
- 11 A I believe he was standing out in front of Chief  
12 Rushton's bumper. Chief Rushton had told him to stand by  
13 the bumper of the truck.
- 14 Q He was outside of the residence?
- 15 A Yes, sir.
- 16 Q Okay. And what did you notice about the residence  
17 at this time?
- 18 A As soon as I arrived, which at that time, I placed  
19 Mr. James Pearson in detention in the back of my vehicle.  
20 So when we both arrived, I exited the vehicle and I  
21 observed a window to be broken out of the residence.
- 22 Q Where was the window that was broken out of the  
23 residence?
- 24 A It was on the right side of the residence. If  
25 you're standing in front of the residence, it was on the

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 right side of the front door.

2 Q Is it fairly close to the front door?

3 A Yes, sir.

4 Q Did you notice anything else around the window?

5 A I noticed there was large pieces of glass that were  
6 on the ground outside of the window. There was some shards  
7 of glass on the inside. There was also a hammer laying on  
8 the ground.

9 Q Did you find out who owned -- or who was living in  
10 that residence?

11 A I did. The residence had a sign that was For Rent.  
12 I contacted that number and they advised me that the  
13 current tenants were in the process of getting ready to  
14 leave, but they gave me the number of the current tenants,  
15 which was a Mr. Hinds. I contacted Mr. Hinds and advised  
16 him of the situation. I did ask him on the phone if he  
17 knew James Pearson or Ralph Pearson and he told me he had  
18 no idea who they were and that nobody should have been  
19 inside his residence.

20 Q Did he indicate to you that anybody had permission  
21 to be in the residence?

22 A He advised me that nobody had permission to be  
23 inside that residence. He was in Florida at this time.

24 Q Did he indicate to you that anybody had permission  
25 to take anything from the residence?

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 A No, sir.

2 Q Okay. And what did you do at that point?

3 A At that point, I obtained some photographs of the  
4 area. I contacted the actual landlord back and advised him  
5 that they would need to come out and secure the window  
6 because Mr. Hinds said he couldn't make it back from  
7 Florida by that evening to make sure the residence was  
8 secure. Chief Rushton placed Mr. Ralph Pearson back in his  
9 patrol vehicle. We went back to the address at [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
10 Avenue and gave an escort for Mr. James Pearson's  
11 significant other to escort the vehicle up to the police  
12 department so we could remove the items that I believed to  
13 be stolen.

14 Q I'm going to show you some pictures -- one moment.  
15 (WHEREUPON State's Exhibits 1 through 7 was marked  
16 for identification.)

17 BY MR. GRIMES:

18 Q Let me show you what's been marked as State's  
19 Exhibit 1 for identification purposes and ask you if you're  
20 familiar with that picture?

21 A I am.

22 Q And what is that a picture of?

23 A That is a picture of inside the Mercury Cougar, the  
24 passenger side of that vehicle. And I took this photo.

25 Q Okay. And does it fairly and accurately depict

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 what the inside of the vehicle looked like that day?

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q Okay.

4 MR. GRIMES: At this point, the State would move  
5 the introduce State's Exhibit 1 into evidence.

6 MR. THOMPSON: No objection.

7 (WHEREUPON State's Exhibit 1 was entered into  
8 evidence.)

9 BY MR. GRIMES:

10 Q I'm going to show you what's been marked previously  
11 for identification purposes as State's Exhibit 2 and  
12 State's Exhibit 3. If you could start with State's Exhibit  
13 2 and tell us what's in that picture.

14 A This is going to be the window of the residence at  
15 313 Sabra Avenue that was broken out.

16 Q Did you take that picture?

17 A I took this photo as well.

18 Q Okay. And does it fairly and accurately depict  
19 what the window looked like that day?

20 A Yes, sir, it does.

21 Q And State's Exhibit 3, could you tell us what's in  
22 State's Exhibit 3?

23 A In this picture, this is Mr. Ralph Pearson's hand  
24 that had a laceration that was very thin and what I  
25 observed it to be was from the glass of the residence.

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 Q Does it fairly and accurately depict Mr. Ralph  
2 Pearson's hand as it appeared that day?

3 A Yes, sir.

4 Q I'm going to show you State's Exhibit 4, which was  
5 previously marked for identification purposes. What is  
6 that a picture of?

7 A That is a picture of the vehicle as it looked when  
8 I walked around from the corner of the residence to go  
9 behind the residence to check the vehicle the first time.

10 Q And did you take that picture?

11 A I did.

12 Q Does it fairly and accurately depict the way it  
13 looked that day?

14 A Yes, sir.

15 Q State's Exhibit 5 -- what's been marked as State's  
16 Exhibit 5, did you take that picture?

17 A I did. This is going to be a picture of the grill  
18 smoker that was removed from the trunk and as it was placed  
19 by Mr. Ralph Pearson on the back porch.

20 Q Does it fairly and accurately depict the way that  
21 grill was placed that day?

22 A Yes, sir.

23 Q State's Exhibit -- what's been marked as State's  
24 Exhibit 6?

25 A I took this photo as well. This is a picture of

**Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes**

1 the rear of the vehicle from the rear window that was  
2 already broken out with a lot of items in the backseat.

3 Q Is that a fair and accurate representation of that?

4 A Yes, sir, it is.

5 Q And State's Exhibit 7?

6 A This is going to be a map of the area, including  
7 the defendant's residence as well as the residence where  
8 the break-in occurred.

9 Q Is that a fair and accurate representation of where  
10 that part of New Ellenton looks?

11 A Yes, sir.

12 **MR. GRIMES:** Your Honor, at this time, the State  
13 would move to introduce into evidence State's Exhibit 2  
14 through 7.

15 **MR. THOMPSON:** Without objection.

16 (WHEREUPON State's Exhibit No. 2 through State's  
17 Exhibit No. 7 were introduced into evidence.)

18 BY MR. GRIMES:

19 Q You mentioned a cut on Mr. Ralph Pearson's hand.  
20 When did you notice there was a cut on his hand?

21 A When Mr. Pearson was removed from Chief Rushton's  
22 patrol vehicle and secured with handcuffs I observed the  
23 cuts on his hand. But prior to that, I had also observed  
24 blood on his shirt when I spoke with him the first time  
25 when I arrived at [REDACTED] Avenue.

**Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes**

1 Q I'm going to show you again State's Exhibit 4 and  
2 State's Exhibit 5. Which residence is that?

3 A This is going to be the [REDACTED] Avenue residence.

4 Q Okay. Is that where James and Ralph Pearson live?

5 A Yes, sir.

6 Q Okay.

7 MR. GRIMES: Your Honor, at this time, I'd move to  
8 publish State's Exhibit 1 through 7 to the jury. We would  
9 like to do this on this projector.

10 THE COURT: Okay.

11 (WHEREUPON the solicitor's office personnel was  
12 setting up a projector to use.)

13 MR. GRIMES: Your Honor, we're going to ask that  
14 Officer Spires get up and come down and point to some of  
15 these pictures.

16 (WHEREUPON the defendant left the witness box to  
17 publish the exhibits to the jury.)

18 BY MR. GRIMES:

19 Q Officer, this is State's Exhibit 7. What is this a  
20 depiction of?

21 A This is actually a view of the city of New  
22 Ellenton. This is actually going to be the defendant's  
23 residence right here.

24 Q And is that on [REDACTED] Street?

25 A That is on [REDACTED] Street. Your incident location

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 where the actual break in occurred is going to be right  
2 here.

3 Q You have any estimate of about how far this is? I  
4 know this is blown-up picture. How long would it take to  
5 drive from one area to the other?

6 A It takes approximately two minutes at the most.  
7 Not even that.

8 Q When you noticed the defendant's vehicle, where  
9 were you?

10 A I was currently working on Old Whiskey Road. The  
11 defendants actually passed me traveling southbound toward  
12 Risher Avenue. I observed the vehicle drive past me. I  
13 saw both defendants inside the vehicle as well as the  
14 vehicle loaded down. I turned around at this residence  
15 right here and I followed the vehicle up to Risher Avenue  
16 to James Street and then as it turned on [REDACTED] Street, I  
17 watched it pull in behind the residence there on [REDACTED]  
18 Street.

19 Q Okay. I'm going to show you State's Exhibit 1. I  
20 know you described it. This was the defendant's vehicle?  
21 This is the vehicle the way you saw it?

22 A It is. When I arrived, everything was exactly in  
23 that place. There was nowhere for anybody to sit in the  
24 front passenger seat as it was loaded down.

25 Q Is that the console in the middle that you were

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 talking about?

2 A That is, yes, sir.

3 Q And is that where James Pearson was sitting?

4 A Right. He was sitting just about where your  
5 armrest would be.

6 Q And are those the items that were in the vehicle?

7 A Yes, sir.

8 Q No. 4. Is that --

9 A This is how it looked when I walked around the  
10 corner of the residence with Mr. James Pearson's  
11 significant other. That's exactly how the vehicle was  
12 parked and that's what I observed when I got around behind  
13 the residence.

14 Q And that Mercury Cougar is the vehicle that we're  
15 talking about?

16 A Yes, sir.

17 Q All right. No. 6, please.

18 (WHEREUPON there was a pause in the proceedings.)

19 BY MR. GRIMES:

20 Q Officer Spires, the court reporter is actually to  
21 your back. So if you could speak up a little bit to make  
22 it a little easier for her to hear.

23 A Sorry.

24 Q What's in State's Exhibit 6, this picture?

25 A This is going to be the passenger side, rear window

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 that had been broken out, like I said, previously. It just  
2 has a bunch of items that completely took up the entire  
3 backseat.

4 Q What are we looking at there that's blue?

5 A That was actually a blowup mattress and there's  
6 some various other -- I believe compressors and things,  
7 vehicle parts that were below it, including a jack.

8 Q Was the backseat filled with stuff?

9 A Yes, sir, it was.

10 Q And No. 5, please. Is that a picture of the  
11 Charcoal grill you were talking about earlier?

12 A Yes, sir, it is. This grill was actually being  
13 removed from the trunk of the vehicle when Mr. Ralph  
14 Pearson was placing the grill -- he placed it up there just  
15 in that manner. That's exactly how it looked.

16 Q So Ralph Pearson is the person that placed that  
17 Charcoal grill on the deck?

18 A Yes, sir.

19 Q And that's the deck at the [REDACTED] Street -- [REDACTED]  
20 Avenue home?

21 A Yes, sir.

22 Q And did you see him do that?

23 A Yes, sir.

24 Q And that grill came from the trunk of that vehicle?

25 A Yes, sir. The trunk was actually propped up by the

## Detroit Spires - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 grill.

2 Q So the grill didn't fit in the trunk?

3 A No, sir.

4 Q Okay. Did you notice that before the vehicle  
5 stopped?

6 A I did.

7 Q State's Exhibit No. 2, please.

8 A This is the window at the [REDACTED] Avenue residence  
9 that was broken out. There was a few shards on the inside  
10 near there were several large shards of glass laying on the  
11 ground just below this window. There is still some glass  
12 left in the window itself.

13 Q Is there a hammer near that window?

14 A There was.

15 Q And I think you mentioned earlier about how far is  
16 this window from the front door of that residence?

17 A If you walk up approximately two feet, it's just to  
18 the right of the window.

19 Q And State's Exhibit 3, whose hands are those?

20 A That is Mr. Ralph Pearson's right hand. There's a  
21 laceration, like I said, right there. It's a very small,  
22 thin laceration and there was also another laceration on  
23 his left hand.

24 Q And that was on his hand the day he was arrested?

25 A Yes, sir.

**Detroit Spires - Cross-Examination by Mr. Thompson**

1 Q Thank you. Please have a seat back up on the  
2 witness stand.

3 (WHEREUPON the witness returned to the witness  
4 box.)

5 BY MR. GRIMES:

6 Q Officer Spires, please answer any questions defense  
7 counsel has for you.

8 A Yes, sir.

9 CROSS-EXAMINATION.

10 BY MR. THOMPSON:

11 Q Good morning, Officer Spires. Very briefly. Did  
12 you take any fingerprints at all on any of this merchandise  
13 in the car?

14 A No, sir, no fingerprints were taken. The day that  
15 this incident occurred, we had a very strong rain. As I  
16 was actually speaking with both defendants at the [REDACTED]  
17 Avenue residence, and pretty much everything got rained on.

18 Q Okay. Did you take any fingerprints inside the  
19 house?

20 A No, sir.

21 Q It was -- the only cuts on Mr. Ralph's body were on  
22 his hands right?

23 A Yes, sir.

24 Q Okay. And he had blood on his shirt?

25 A Yes, sir.

**Detroit Spires - Cross-Examination by Mr. Thompson**

1 Q And it was really apparent to you that he'd been  
2 cut?

3 A Yes, sir.

4 Q First time you saw him, you looked at him and  
5 thought, He's been cut.

6 A Yes, sir.

7 Q Right.

8 **MR. THOMPSON:** Beg the Court's indulgence.

9 (WHEREUPON there was a pause in the proceedings.)

10 **MR. THOMPSON:** No further questions.

11 **THE COURT:** Redirect, if any.

12 **MR. GRIMES:** None, Your Honor.

13 **THE COURT:** You may step down.

14 Next witness.

15 **MR. MILLER:** Your Honor, the State calls William  
16 James Pearson.

17 **WILLIAM JAMES PEARSON,**

18 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

19 **THE CLERK:** Have a seat in the witness box, state  
20 your full name for the Court, spelling your last.

21 **THE WITNESS:** Williams James Pearson.

22 **THE COURT:** Speak up Mr. Pearson.

23 **THE WITNESS:** William James Pearson.

24 ///

25 ///

## William James Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Miller

DIRECT EXAMINATION

1  
2 BY MR. MILLER:

3 Q Mr. Pearson, I am going to ask you to speak up  
4 because I understand this is an uncomfortable time, but the  
5 court reporter needs to be able to hear you, the jurors  
6 need to hear you.

7 Mr. Pearson, were you involved in the burglary of  
8 the residence at [REDACTED] Avenue in New Ellenton, South  
9 Carolina that we're here about today?

10 A Yes, sir.

11 Q Who was involved with that burglary with you, if  
12 anyone?

13 A My father.

14 Q And what was your involvement in the burglary?  
15 What did you do?

16 A I would put stuff from the porch, take stuff from  
17 the porch to the car.

18 Q Okay. How did you get to [REDACTED] Avenue that  
19 day?

20 A I was with my dad.

21 Q Were you in a plane, helicopter, car?

22 A Car.

23 Q Okay. What car was it?

24 A A Mercury.

25 Q Let me show you what's been previously entered as

## William James Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Miller

1 State's Exhibit 4. Do you recognize that vehicle?

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q Okay. Is that the vehicle that you went to [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED] Avenue in?

5 A Yes, sir.

6 Q Okay. Who was driving the vehicle?

7 A My dad.

8 Q You don't have a driver's license, do you?

9 A No, sir.

10 Q Okay. Why did you go to that residence in the

11 first place?

12 A We went to look at it. It was for rent.

13 Q Okay. Does your dad or at this time, did your dad

14 live with you?

15 A Yes, sir.

16 Q Over on [REDACTED] Avenue?

17 A Yes, sir.

18 Q Okay. So you got to the residence. What did you

19 do whenever you got to the residence?

20 A We just -- we just looked at it, you know, and

21 called --

22 Q Were you looking in the windows or were you just

23 standing outside kind of looking at it from the outside?

24 A We just -- from the front side, we just looked at

25 it through the window.

## William James Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Miller

1 THE COURT: Speak up, please, sir.

2 By MR. MILLER:

3 Q Okay. So what happened next? You're looking at  
4 the window and then what happened? Or looking at the  
5 residence and then what happened?

6 A The door was unlocked.

7 Q Which door? The front or the back?

8 A The front door.

9 Q Okay.

10 A My dad went in and there was some stuff right there  
11 at the door.

12 Q What kind of stuff was it.

13 A I don't remember. It was just --

14 Q Stuff?

15 A (Witness nodded head.)

16 Q Okay.

17 A Yeah.

18 Q Okay. And so what did you do?

19 A We took the stuff and put it in the car.

20 Q Okay. Was the car parked in front of the house or  
21 was the car parked behind the house?

22 A To the side.

23 Q Beside the house?

24 A (Witness nodded head.)

25 Q So you were taking stuff out of the front door?

## William James Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Miller

- 1 A (Witness nodded head.)
- 2 Q Or getting stuff from your father at the front  
3 door, taking it to the car?
- 4 A (Witness nodded head.)
- 5 Q Okay.
- 6 A Yes, sir.
- 7 Q Did you load up all that stuff in the back of the  
8 car and in the passenger seat of the car?
- 9 A Yes, sir.
- 10 Q I want to show you what's been marked as State's.  
11 Exhibit 1. Is that what the front seat of the car,  
12 the passenger seat of the car looked like that day?
- 13 A Yes, sir.
- 14 Q Okay. I need you to speak up, now. State's.  
15 Exhibit No. 5, is this the -- did you take that grill and  
16 smoker from Sabra?
- 17 A Yes, sir.
- 18 Q Okay. And where did you put it in the car?
- 19 A In the trunk.
- 20 Q Okay. Was the trunk lid able to close with that in  
21 the back of it?
- 22 A No.
- 23 THE COURT: Speak up, please.
- 24 BY MR. MILLER:
- 25 Q I'm showing you State's Exhibit No. 6. Is this

## William James Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Miller

1 what the backseat of the car looked like that day?

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q Now, when you left the Sabra Avenue address, who  
4 was with you?

5 A My dad.

6 Q Okay. Were you riding in the car or were you  
7 driving the car?

8 A I was riding.

9 Q Where were you sitting?

10 A Right where that microwave was at.

11 Q Okay. You were sitting in the front seat?

12 A Yes, sir.

13 Q Between all of this stuff and your dad? Or between  
14 all this stuff and the window?

15 A The window. The right side of the window.

16 Q Okay. So you're sitting up on top of all that?

17 A Yeah.

18 Q Okay. Now, when you first encountered Officer  
19 Spires, you didn't tell him the truth about where all this  
20 stuff had come from, did you?

21 A No, sir.

22 Q And ultimately -- ultimately, Officer Spires found  
23 out where all this stuff came from, didn't he?

24 A Yes.

25 Q How did Officer Spires find out where all this

## William James Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Miller

1 stuff came from?

2 A My dad brought them back to the house.

3 Q At [REDACTED]

4 A Yes, sir.

5 Q Okay. Now, you've been in this courtroom before,  
6 haven't you, sir?

7 A Yes, sir.

8 Q And isn't it true that a month or so ago, you  
9 actually pled guilty to this burglary?

10 A Yes, sir.

11 Q And as part of your guilty plea, did you cooperate  
12 and provide a statement to the State for use if we needed  
13 to against your father?

14 A Yes, sir.

15 Q And at that plea hearing, it wasn't Judge Early, it  
16 was another judge, correct?

17 A Right.

18 Q And that judge told you what the penalties for  
19 perjury were before you made your statement?

20 A No, sir.

21 Q He told you that you could be charged with perjury  
22 if you lied?

23 A Yeah.

24 Q And you were under oath, correct?

25 A Yes, sir.

**William James Pearson - Cross-Examination by Mr. Thompson**

1 Q Okay. And the facts that you just testified to  
2 here today, are the same ones that you stated on the record  
3 that day, aren't they?

4 A Yes, sir.

5 Q Mr. Pearson, I know this is difficult. We've been  
6 talking about your dad. Who is your father?

7 A William Pearson.

8 Q Is he seated over at the defense table?

9 A Yes, sir.

10 Q Okay. And does he ever go by Ralph Pearson?

11 A No.

12 Q Okay. That's what we've been -- okay. And you go  
13 by Jimmy or James Pearson?

14 A James.

15 Q Okay.

16 MR. MILLER: Thank you, Your Honor. No further  
17 questions.

18 Please answer any questions Mr. Thompson has.

19 THE COURT: Mr. Thompson?

20 MR. THOMPSON: Beg the Court's indulgence.

21 **CROSS-EXAMINATION**

22 **BY MR. THOMPSON:**

23 Q Okay. Just so we don't confuse anyone, James,  
24 you're not in jail right now because of pleading guilty to  
25 burglary; correct?

## William James Pearson - Cross-Examination by Mr. Thompson

- 1 A Correct.
- 2 Q Okay. What are you in jail for now?
- 3 A Driving under suspension.
- 4 Q Okay.
- 5 A DUI.
- 6 Q Okay. DUS and DUI. Anything else?
- 7 A Possession of a controlled substance.
- 8 Q Okay. And when you were charged, you were charged
- 9 with what related to this burglary? Charged with burglary?
- 10 A Second.
- 11 Q Second.
- 12 A Second degree.
- 13 Q Second degree, nonviolent?
- 14 A Yes, sir.
- 15 Q Okay. And could have gotten how much time?
- 16 A Ten years.
- 17 Q Could have gotten ten years, right?
- 18 A Uh-huh, yes, sir.
- 19 Q And you got a pretty good record when you pleaded
- 20 guilty, right?
- 21 A Yes, sir.
- 22 Q A lot of stuff on your record?
- 23 A Not nothing major.
- 24 Q Other property crimes?
- 25 A No.

## William James Pearson - Cross-Examination by Mr. Thompson

- 1 Q No? No fraudulent check charges?
- 2 A Fraudulent check, yes, sir.
- 3 Q Okay. Several DUS charges. Shoplifting?
- 4 A Yeah, shoplifting.
- 5 Q Okay. And criminal domestic violence?
- 6 A Yes, sir.
- 7 Q Okay. Any drug charges?
- 8 A Several possession, simple possession.
- 9 Q Okay. And giving false information to the police?
- 10 A Yes, sir.
- 11 Q Not once, but at least twice?
- 12 A (Witness nodded head.)
- 13 Q So you'd been convicted of lying to the police at
- 14 least twice; correct?
- 15 A Yes, sir.
- 16 Q But you didn't get ten years, right?
- 17 A No. No.
- 18 Q No. Did you get nine years?
- 19 A No, sir.
- 20 Q No. In fact, you didn't get any time, did you?
- 21 You got probation, right?
- 22 A I got five years suspended to probation.
- 23 Q Okay. Got probation, correct?
- 24 A Yes, sir.
- 25 Q And now you're in jail now. When this was first

## William James Pearson - Cross-Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 being investigated, did you tell Officer Spires the truth  
2 the first time he asked you about --

3 A No, sir.

4 Q -- this thing?

5 A No.

6 Q In fact, tried to take him somewhere else, correct?

7 A Yes, sir.

8 Q At some point in time though, you actually told  
9 them that your father didn't have anything to do with it  
10 and that would be on an in car video, correct?

11 A Maybe.

12 Q In fact, you told Officer Spires that your father  
13 didn't have anything to do with this.

14 A I may have. I may have, yes, sir.

15 Q May have. But when it came time to get this charge  
16 dealt with for you, you told them something different,  
17 correct?

18 A Yes, sir.

19 Q Now, you've talked to the police about this.  
20 You've talked to your father about this, correct?

21 A Yes, sir.

22 Q In fact, you talked to him over the telephone?

23 A Yes, sir.

24 Q Because you got out?

25 A Yeah.

**William James Pearson - Cross-Examination by Mr. Thompson**

1 Q And while you were on the telephone with him, you  
2 told him, Look, I'm going to tell them the truth, I'm going  
3 to tell them this is my fault, correct?

4 A (Witness nodded head.)

5 THE COURT: Answer the question.

6 BY MR. THOMPSON:

7 A I don't remember the conversations, I mean...

8 Q So you don't remember talking to him over the  
9 phone? You don't remember what you told him on the phone?

10 A I don't remember every conversation. I talked to  
11 him a lot.

12 Q Okay. But you wouldn't disagree with me that you  
13 might have -- in this big web of God knows how many stories  
14 you've told, you wouldn't disagree with me that you might  
15 have told him that you were going to say the truth, that he  
16 had nothing to do with this, correct?

17 A Correct.

18 Q Okay. One more. You spoke with other inmates at  
19 the jail about your charges, right?

20 A No, sir.

21 Q No?

22 A No.

23 Q And -- well, let me ask you a different question.  
24 At any point in time, did you talk -- strike that. Do you  
25 admit or deny that you told David Rogier that your father

## William James Pearson - Redirect Examination by Mr. Miller

1 had nothing to do with this?

2 A I did not.

3 Q Did not?

4 A I don't know David Rogier.

5 Q Okay. Do you admit or deny that you told Jimmy

6 Sikes that your father had nothing to do with this?

7 A I don't know Jimmy Sikes.

8 Q Do you admit or deny that you told --

9 A I deny it.

10 Q Okay.

11 MR. THOMPSON: Beg the Court's indulgence.

12 (WHEREUPON there was a pause in the proceedings.)

13 MR. THOMPSON: I have no further questions.

14 THE COURT: Mr. Miller?

15 MR. MILLER: Thank you, Your Honor.

16 **REDIRECT EXAMINATION**

17 **BY MR. MILLER:**

18 Q Mr. Pearson, has the State promised you anything  
19 relative to these new charges to get you to testify here  
20 today?

21 A No, sir.

22 Q Were you promised anything? Coerced, forced? Did  
23 somebody force you to testify here today?

24 A No, sir.

25 Q You said in your testimony that you talked to your

## William James Pearson - Redirect Examination by Mr. Miller

1 dad a lot?

2 A (Witness nodded head.)

3 Q Is that a fair statement?

4 A Yes, sir.

5 Q When you got out of jail and you talked to your dad  
6 the first time on the telephone and after you were out of  
7 jail, do you recall telling him that you remember having  
8 problems with your significant other, with your wife and  
9 that you had had to leave the house?

10 A Yes, sir.

11 Q And at this time you told your dad that you had  
12 been forced to use his own debit card to purchase clothing,  
13 didn't you?

14 A Yes, sir.

15 Q And what did your dad tell you whenever you told  
16 him that?

17 A Don't worry about it.

18 THE COURT: What? Say that again.

19 THE WITNESS: He said don't -- he said that's all  
20 right.

21 BY MR. MILLER:

22 Q He told you not to worry about it. You didn't tell  
23 your dad in that conversation after you told him, I just  
24 had to use your debit card, you didn't tell him, Oh, by the  
25 way, I'm testifying for the State against you, did you?

## William James Pearson - Redirect Examination by Mr. Miller

1 MR. THOMPSON: Objection.

2 THE COURT: What's the objection.

3 MR. THOMPSON: Object to leading, Your Honor.

4 THE COURT: Sustained. Rephrase your question.

5 That was awful leading.

6 BY MR. MILLER:

7 Q You said you talked to your dad a lot?

8 A Yes, sir.

9 Q Do you still talk to your dad a lot up until now?  
10 You can't talk to him while you're in jail, can you?

11 A No, sir.

12 Q They keep you separated from each other?

13 A Yes, sir.

14 Q When you were out, did you talk to him a good bit  
15 on the telephone?

16 A Yeah.

17 Q You don't want to be here testifying against your  
18 father, do you?

19 A No, sir.

20 Q Have you talked to your grandparents or your  
21 girlfriend or anybody else about this?

22 A Not no specifics, no.

23 Q And you didn't want to tell people in the jail that  
24 you were testifying against your father, did you?

25 A No, sir.

## William James Pearson - Recross-Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 Q What do they call people that testify against their  
2 codefendants?

3 A Snitches.

4 Q Snitches. It's not a good thing to be in jail; is  
5 it?

6 A No, sir.

7 MR. MILLER: No further questions, Your Honor.

8 THE COURT: You may step down.

9 MR. THOMPSON: Your Honor, may I recross?

10 THE COURT: You know my rules. You need to ask him  
11 something?

12 MR. THOMPSON: Just one briefly for --

13 THE COURT: Go ahead.

14 RECROSS EXAMINATION

15 BY MR. THOMPSON:

16 Q Mr. Miller asked you about whether you'd been  
17 promised anything; you're currently, though, facing  
18 revocation of your probation; is that correct?

19 A Yes.

20 THE COURT: You may step down.

21 MR. MILLER: Your Honor, may we approach, briefly?

22 (WHEREUPON, there was a bench conference out of the  
23 hearing of the jury and the Court Reporter.)

24 THE COURT: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, we're  
25 going to take a morning break just a tad early. I'll tell

**William James Pearson - Recross-Examination by Mr. Thompson**

1 you exactly why. The next witness has landed in Augusta  
2 and she's en route; and I've already fussed at Mr. Miller,  
3 but anyway we're doing the best we can. And it may be --  
4 we'll just see how it goes.

5 Let's take about a ten minute break and then we'll  
6 assess the situation. I don't want y'all to sit in there  
7 waiting and doing nothing. Y'all select me a foreperson,  
8 then we'll be back and see where we are. Don't discuss the  
9 case, don't deliberate.

10 Everybody else remain seated.

11 (WHEREUPON the jury left the courtroom at 11:17  
12 a.m.)

13 THE COURT: All right. Anything for the record  
14 before we break?

15 MR. MILLER: Nothing from the State, Your Honor.

16 MR. THOMPSON: Nothing from the defense, Your  
17 Honor.

18 THE COURT: Let me see the two of y'all, or the  
19 four of y'all, however many of you there are.

20 We'll stand at ease for about ten or fifteen  
21 minutes.

22 (WHEREUPON a recess was observed.)

23 THE COURT: Mr. Miller anything for the record  
24 before we start?

25 MR. MILLER: Nothing from the State, Your Honor.

## William James Pearson - Recross-Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 MR. THOMPSON: Nothing from the defense, Your  
2 Honor.

3 THE COURT: All right. Bring the jury in, please.

4 MR. MILLER: Mr. Grimes will be handling the next  
5 witness, Your Honor.

6 (WHEREUPON the jury entered the courtroom at 11:39  
7 a.m.)

8 THE COURT: Congratulations. You were elected  
9 unanimously?

10 THE FOREMAN: I volunteered.

11 THE COURT: Quick story. I came out here one day  
12 and the person sitting right there after they came out, all  
13 frowning. I said what's wrong, ma'am; she said, I went to  
14 the bathroom and when I came back they had elected me as  
15 foreman.

16 Mr. Miller, you may call your next witness.

17 MR. GRIMES: State calls Sue Beerman.

18 THE COURT: Ms. Beerman. Come right here and place  
19 your left hand on the Bible and raise your right, please.

20 Sue Anne Beerman,

21 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

22 THE CLERK: Have a seat in the witness box. State  
23 your full name for the Court, spelling your last.

24 THE WITNESS: My name is Sue Anne Beerman,  
25 B-e-e-r-m-a-n.

## Sue Anne Beerman - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

DIRECT EXAMINATION

1  
2 BY MR. GRIMES:

3 Q Good morning, Ms. Beerman.

4 A Good morning.

5 Q Ms. Beerman, in May of this year, where did you  
6 live?

7 A [REDACTED] Avenue.

8 Q Is that in New Ellenton?

9 A Yes.

10 Q In Aiken, South Carolina?

11 A Yes.

12 Q I'm going to show you what's in evidence as State's  
13 Exhibit 2. Do you recognize that?

14 A That is the window on the right side of the house.

15 Q Okay. On [REDACTED] Avenue?

16 A Yes.

17 Q Okay. Ms. Beerman who did you live on [REDACTED] Avenue  
18 with?

19 A John Hinds, H-i-n-d-s, my fiance.

20 Q And had the two of you lived there long?

21 A It was a total of two months because he got laid  
22 off from his job, so...

23 Q Where was he working when he was here?

24 A At Savannah River Site.

25 Q Okay. And where do you live now?

## Sue Anne Beerman - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

- 1 A Florida.
- 2 Q Still live with him?
- 3 A Yeah.
- 4 Q What is he doing today?
- 5 A He is working. He's an iron worker. He's working  
6 at Sea World.
- 7 Q He's working at Sea World?
- 8 A Yeah.
- 9 Q And were you in Florida earlier this morning?
- 10 A Yes, I was.
- 11 Q Plan on being in Florida later today?
- 12 A Yes, I do.
- 13 Q Okay. On May 28, 2012, were you with Mr. Hinds?
- 14 A Yes, we were in Tampa.
- 15 Q Y'all were in Tampa?
- 16 A Yes.
- 17 Q And were you there temporarily?
- 18 A Just visiting family for the weekend.
- 19 Q All right. At that point you still lived here; is  
20 that correct?
- 21 A Yes.
- 22 Q Okay. And did you get a call from -- did y'all get  
23 a call from Officer Spires?
- 24 A Yes, we did. Sunday, I believe. And we left  
25 Monday morning to get back as quick as we could to identify

## Sue Anne Beerman - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 the items that they had.

2 Q Before we get there, do you recall what the call  
3 was about?

4 A They said that the house has been burglarized. She  
5 had a for rent sign out, so that's why they called the  
6 landlord and then the landlord called us.

7 Q The landlord called you?

8 A And then we got a call from Spires also.

9 Q Okay. And that was in relation to the burglary?

10 A Yeah.

11 Q Do you know Mr. Pearson?

12 A No.

13 Q Ralph Pearson is actually sitting at that table  
14 over there. Let me know if you recognize him. Does  
15 Mr. Hinds know Mr. Pearson?

16 A No.

17 Q Does he know James Pearson, his son?

18 A No.

19 Q And you don't know James Pearson either?

20 A No.

21 Q Okay. When y'all left that house for the weekend  
22 for the trip, did anyone have permission to go in the  
23 house?

24 A No.

25 Q Did anyone have permission to take y'all's stuff

## Sue Anne Beerman - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes

1 from inside the house?

2 A No.

3 Q When you got back from the trip, did you meet with  
4 Officer Spires?

5 A Yes.

6 Q Where was that?

7 A At the New Ellenton police station.

8 Q And what was at the New Ellenton police station?

9 A We were identifying the items that they had gotten  
10 from them and they were all out of our house.

11 Q They were out of the inside of your house?

12 A Yes.

13 Q And do you remember what a few of those things  
14 were?

15 A I know they had a grill, a blowup mattress, they --  
16 I mean they even stole bath soap, mop, broom. There was  
17 some air-conditioning items for his truck that we were  
18 going to have installed.

19 Q Whose truck?

20 A John Hinds.

21 Q John Hinds' truck?

22 A Yeah.

23 Q I'm going to ask you if you recognize --

24 MR. GRIMES: I'm not sure if you can even see,  
25 Mr. Foreman.

**Sue Anne Beerman - Direct Examination by Mr. Grimes**

1           **THE WITNESS:** I've never seen that one, but that is  
2 the blowup mattress that was John Hinds. That's the grill  
3 there.

4           **MR. GRIMES:** Just for the record, this is State's  
5 Exhibit 6 I'm pointing to.

6 BY MR. GRIMES:

7 Q           And is this the air mattress that was inside your  
8 house?

9 A           Uh-huh, in the tool box.

10 Q           And in State's Exhibit 5, do you recognize that  
11 Charcoal grill?

12 A           Uh-huh.

13 Q           And where did that come from?

14 A           That was on the front porch.

15 Q           And y'all were renting this house?

16 A           Yes.

17           (WHEREUPON there was a pause in the proceedings.)

18 BY MR. GRIMES:

19 Q           Ms. Beerman?

20 A           Yes.

21 Q           The window on the side of the house, was that  
22 broken when you left for Florida?

23 A           No, it wasn't.

24 Q           Please answer any questions defense counsel may  
25 have for you.

## Sue Anne Beerman - Cross-Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 A Okay.

2 CROSS-EXAMINATION

3 BY MR. THOMPSON:

4 Q Hi, Ms. Beerman?

5 A How you doing?

6 Q Very briefly. You said that y'all were renting  
7 that house, correct?

8 A Yes, we were.

9 Q And you actually weren't there when this house was  
10 broken into, correct?

11 A No.

12 Q And your fiance wasn't there when the house was  
13 broken into either, right?

14 A No.

15 Q Y'all were both in Tampa, Florida?

16 A Uh-huh.

17 Q And so other than what the police had told you of  
18 their investigation, you don't have any firsthand knowledge  
19 of what actually happened, correct?

20 A No.

21 Q And I think you said the grill was on the front  
22 porch, right?

23 A Yes.

24 Q Okay. Thank you. I have no further questions.

25 THE COURT: Anything on redirect?

1           **MR. GRIMES:** Nothing, Your Honor.

2           **THE COURT:** All right. Ma'am, you may step down.  
3 Thank you for coming and making the effort. I hope you get  
4 home safely.

5           **THE WITNESS:** Thank you.

6           **MR. MILLER:** Your Honor, we would ask Ms. Beerman  
7 be released from her subpoena if there's no objection.

8           **MR. THOMPSON:** No objection.

9           **THE COURT:** All right. Next witness, please.

10           (WHEREUPON State's Exhibit No. 8 was marked for  
11 identification.)

12           **MR. MILLER:** Your Honor, at this time, the State  
13 would move to introduce what's been previously -- it has  
14 not been previously marked, what would be marked as State's  
15 Exhibit No. 8 for identification purposes. That is a  
16 stipulation that we have agreed to with defense counsel and  
17 the State would move to publish that to the jury upon its  
18 entry.

19           **MR. THOMPSON:** No objection, Your Honor.

20           **THE COURT:** All right. Mr. Foreman, ladies and  
21 gentlemen, a stipulation is where the lawyers are able to  
22 agree that these facts are not items in dispute. They are,  
23 in fact, the truth; so therefore, no testimony will be  
24 necessary. So accept the stipulation as truthful facts.

25           (WHEREUPON State's Exhibit No. 8 was entered into

1 evidence.)

2           **MR. MILLER:** Your Honor, in regards to State of  
3 South Carolina versus William Ralph Pearson, Indictment No.  
4 2012-GS-02-01518, the State and the defense stipulate that  
5 the defendant, William Ralph Pearson, has prior convictions  
6 for burglary on September 12th of 2005 and July 23rd of  
7 2009. Done in Aiken, South Carolina and dated October 16th  
8 of 2012.

9           **THE COURT:** Thank you.

10           **MR. MILLER:** Thank you, Your Honor.

11           **THE COURT:** Anything else? Next witness, please.

12           **MR. MILLER:** Your Honor, the State rests.

13           **THE COURT:** Thank you.

14           Ladies and gentlemen, that concludes the State's  
15 evidence.

16           Mr. Thompson, may I see you over here, please.

17           (WHEREUPON, there was a bench conference out of the  
18 hearing of the jury and the Court Reporter.)

19           **THE COURT:** Mr. Foreman, ladies and gentlemen,  
20 normally at this time at the conclusion of the State's  
21 case, we have to take a break and I have to consider  
22 certain matters of law. The lawyers have agreed that to  
23 keep y'all from having to wait around, we're going to go  
24 ahead and take one defense witness and then we're going to  
25 break for lunch and --

1           How about call down to the Bowery and tell them I'm  
2 sending 14 down there and to set up that back room.

3           Y'all want to eat at the bowery? You may want to  
4 eat somewhere else.

5           **A JUROR:** That's fine.

6           **THE COURT:** They've got a special on fruit this  
7 afternoon.

8           They're going to leave here in the about 15 or 20  
9 minutes.

10          That suit? Mr. Foreman, you're the boss. That  
11 suit?

12          **THE FOREMAN:** Yes, sir.

13          **THE COURT:** All right. Call your witness,  
14 Mr. Thompson.

15          **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, defense would call  
16 Mr. Jimmy Sikes.

17          **THE COURT:** All right. Mr. Sikes, come around  
18 please.

19          Y'all please get him for me.

20          (WHEREUPON Mr. Sikes entered the courtroom.)

21                               **JIMMY SIKES,**

22          having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

23          **THE CLERK:** Have a seat in the witness box.

24          **THE COURT:** Have a seat, please.

25          **THE CLERK:** State your full name for the Court,

## Jimmy Sikes - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 spelling your last.

2 THE WITNESS: Jimmy Daniel Sikes, S-i-k-e-s.

3 MR. THOMPSON: Your Honor, may it please the Court,  
4 Mr. Miller, Mr. Grimes.

5 DIRECT EXAMINATION

6 BY MR. THOMPSON:

7 Q Mr. Sikes, do you know Mr. James Pearson?

8 A Yes, sir.

9 Q How did you meet Mr. James Pearson?

10 A In the holding cell back here.

11 Q At the courthouse?

12 A Yes, sir.

13 Q About when did you meet him?

14 A I really couldn't give you the exact date. It was  
15 like two or three months ago.

16 Q Okay. At the time did you have any idea about what  
17 kind of charges he was facing?

18 A No, sir.

19 Q Okay. Did he speak with you at all about a  
20 burglary charge?

21 A Yes, sir.

22 Q Can you tell me what he said about his burglary  
23 charge?

24 A Told me -- he asked me to relay a message to his  
25 father, that his father had nothing to do with it and he

**Jimmy Sikes - Cross-Examination by Mr. Miller**

1 was going to take the rap for everything because his dad  
2 was in the car the whole time.

3 Q And so you did meet him?

4 A Yes, sir.

5 Q And did speak with him?

6 A Yes, sir.

7 MR. THOMPSON: I have no further questions. Please  
8 answer any questions Mr. Miller has.

**CROSS-EXAMINATION**

9  
10 **BY MR. MILLER:**

11 Q Hey, Mr. Sikes.

12 A How you doing?

13 Q You remember me?

14 A Yes, sir.

15 Q Okay. Why are you in the detention center right  
16 now?

17 A Fleeing the scene of a deadly accident.

18 Q All right. So that's still that same charge?

19 A I'm waiting to go up the road now.

20 Q Okay. So you were convicted, or you pled guilty,  
21 in fact, to leaving the scene of an accident involving a  
22 death, correct?

23 A Yes, sir.

24 Q How much time did that carry?

25 A Twenty-five years.

**Jimmy Sikes - Cross-Examination by Mr. Miller**

1 Q Okay. You said you were in the holding cell with  
2 Jimmy Pearson?

3 A Well, Jimmy's the father, right?

4 Q No, Jimmy's the son, that's the father.

5 A Oh, yeah, I just get the names mixed up.

6 Q Okay. That's fine. We've been confused with  
7 that -- well, the jury hasn't, but we've been confused  
8 about it all day.

9 Let me ask you this -- and I didn't hear part of  
10 your testimony there for the second. You said that Jimmy  
11 was in the holding cell back there with you and that Jimmy  
12 asked you to relay a message to his father, correct?

13 A Yes, sir.

14 Q And what was that message?

15 A Told him to keep his mouth shut that he was  
16 responsible for it because his dad stayed in the car the  
17 whole time.

18 Q Okay. Let me ask you this question, if you know:  
19 If his dad really stayed in the car the whole time and  
20 Jimmy wanted to take the rap for it, why would he have to  
21 get that message to his dad?

22 A I honestly couldn't answer that for you, sir.

23 **MR. MILLER:** No further questions.

24 **MR. THOMPSON:** No redirect, Your Honor.

25 **THE COURT:** All right. You may be excused.

1 Any additional witnesses other than the defendant?

2 MR. THOMPSON: None from the defense, Your Honor.

3 THE COURT: How long do you think he will be? Not  
4 long?

5 MR. THOMPSON: With cross, probably 45 minutes.

6 THE COURT: Really?

7 MR. THOMPSON: Or shorter.

8 MR. MILLER: Yes, sir.

9 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Foreman, and ladies and  
10 gentlemen, we've got about probably 30 or 35 minutes worth  
11 of testimony left. Y'all want to do that before you go to  
12 lunch or after you go to lunch? Somebody make a decision.

13 A JUROR: We're here.

14 THE COURT: All right. I need to spend about three  
15 minutes with them and I'll bring you right back out and  
16 we'll do the last witness. Step right back outside.

17 (WHEREUPON the jury left the courtroom at 11:57  
18 a.m.)

19 THE COURT: Mr. Pearson, would you please stand for  
20 me? Raise your right hand.

21 WILLIAM RALPH PEARSON,

22 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

23 THE COURT: All right. You can put your hand down.  
24 You can be seated if you want to, Mr. Pearson. That's  
25 fine, have a seat.

1           Mr. Pearson, we've reached the stage in the trial  
2 now where, obviously, you can testify in your own defense.  
3 In other words, you can come up and tell your side of the  
4 story, tell the jury what your involvement was, if any, or  
5 whatever. I mean you can testify as to whatever questions  
6 your lawyer asks. You understand that?

7           **THE DEFENDANT:** (Witness nodded head.)

8           **THE COURT:** You --

9           **THE DEFENDANT:** Yes, sir.

10          **THE COURT:** Can you hear me?

11          **THE DEFENDANT:** Yes, sir.

12          **THE COURT:** If you do decide to testify, you'll be  
13 subjected to the same rules that everybody else who  
14 testifies is subjected to. In other words, you'll be  
15 subjected to being cross-examined by the solicitor. And as  
16 I understand, you have a record that would be used -- in  
17 other words, to impeach you. In other words to attack your  
18 credibility under our rules. You understand that?

19          **THE DEFENDANT:** Yes, sir.

20          **THE COURT:** You also have the right under the Fifth  
21 Amendment not to testify. You have the right to remain  
22 silent. No one who is charged with the crime can be  
23 compelled to testify. In other words, you can take your  
24 Fifth Amendment right to remain silent. If you choose to  
25 do that, when I instruct the jury at the conclusion of the

1 case, I will tell them that you've exercised your  
2 constitutional right to remain silent. By doing that, the  
3 jury cannot discuss that when they deliberate your guilt or  
4 innocence. They can't even bring it up. They can't  
5 consider it when they decide your guilt or innocence and I  
6 will tell them you have the absolute constitutional right  
7 to remain silent and that's not to be mentioned, talked  
8 about, or discussed in their deliberations. Do you  
9 understand that?

10 **THE DEFENDANT:** Yes, sir.

11 **THE COURT:** You need to let me know now whether or  
12 not you wish to testify.

13 **THE DEFENDANT:** I'll testify.

14 **THE COURT:** All right, sir. And you understand  
15 that you have the right not to and what all that means?

16 **THE DEFENDANT:** Yes, sir.

17 **THE COURT:** Any questions you want to ask me about  
18 testifying?

19 **THE DEFENDANT:** Not -- I --

20 **THE COURT:** That's your decision. It's your  
21 personal decision. In other words, if you get up there and  
22 testify, Mr. Miller or someone can cross-examine you like  
23 you've seen here this morning. If you don't testify,  
24 obviously, they can't ask you any questions. I'll tell the  
25 jury you didn't have to.

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1           **THE DEFENDANT:** Yeah, I got no problems, Your  
2 Honor, with testifying.

3           **THE COURT:** Very well.

4           **MR. THOMPSON:** Bring them back.

5           (WHEREUPON the jury entered the courtroom at 12:00  
6 p.m.)

7           **THE COURT:** All right. You may call your next  
8 witness.

9           **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, the defense calls  
10 Mr. Ralph Pearson.

11           **THE COURT:** Mr. Pearson, come around and place your  
12 left hand on the Bible and raise your right, please.

13                               **WILLIAM RALPH PEARSON,**  
14           having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

15           **THE CLERK:** Have a seat in the witness box. State  
16 your full name for the record, spelling your last.

17           **THE WITNESS:** My name is William Ralph Pearson.  
18 People know me by Jimmy. That's my nickname.

19                               **DIRECT EXAMINATION**

20 **BY MR. THOMPSON:**

21           **Q**           Okay. Mr. Pearson, first thing I want to do,  
22 you've been here sitting in the courtroom. There's this  
23 Exhibit 8 that talks about you having two prior convictions  
24 for burglary.

25           **A**           Yes, sir.

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 Q You been charged with burglary before, right?

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q And when you were charged with burglary before,  
4 what happened?

5 A I --

6 Q Did you plead guilty or not guilty?

7 A I pled guilty. Any time in my whole life if I done  
8 something, I man up to it.

9 Q Okay. Why are you not pleading guilty here today?

10 A I didn't do anything. I went to carry my son to a  
11 rental house with my little grandbaby.

12 Q Let me ask you this. Let's slow down. Why did you  
13 and James go to the house on [REDACTED] Avenue?

14 A My son was about to get in a fight with his  
15 neighbor and he said, Daddy, will you please carry me down  
16 here. I seen a rental house. And my son has got a drug  
17 problem and my daughter-in-law told me that he took six  
18 Xanax, two milligram --

19 Q You can't talk about what other people told you?

20 A Okay. I'm sorry.

21 Q That's all right. So you went to the house on  
22 [REDACTED] to do what?

23 A Well, he was talking to some lady, he said, about  
24 renting the house. He was on his cell phone.

25 Q Do you remember thinking about the conversation

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 that he had about --

2 A I remember him saying \$960.

3 Q To rent the house?

4 A To move in the house.

5 Q Okay. Y'all pulled up to the house.

6 A Yes, sir.

7 Q What happened next?

8 A Well, my guy was -- my little three-year-old grand  
9 baby, she might be four, I'm not sure. But Jamie -- and,  
10 you know, I love my grandbabies to death. I mean, my son  
11 just lied on this. I can't believe it.

12 Q Hold on Mr. Pearson.

13 A All I done was try to help my kid all my life. I  
14 made my mistakes in my life, but I paid for them.

15 Q I want you to hold on.

16 A I didn't do this.

17 Q All right. I want you to hold it together and  
18 answer my questions.

19 A I didn't do this.

20 Q I understand. I want you to hold it together and I  
21 want you to answer my questions. Slow down. Slow down.

22 THE COURT: Take a deep breath, Mr. Pearson, so you  
23 can answer his questions.

24 BY MR. THOMPSON:

25 Q Slow down. I just want you to tell me what

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

- 1 happened. So you got to the house. Who was driving?
- 2 A I was.
- 3 Q You were driving?
- 4 A Yes, sir.
- 5 Q You got to the house. Y'all were there to look at  
6 the rental property?
- 7 A Yeah.
- 8 Q And did you get out of the car?
- 9 A Yes, sir.
- 10 Q You heard Mr. Sikes say something about you stayed  
11 in the car or whatever. Is that true?
- 12 A I was in the back, yes, sir. They've got a  
13 fenced-in yard and it's got a road behind it and a road in  
14 front of it. And I worried about that grandbaby getting  
15 out back; and I was back there shaking that fence and I  
16 think I was talking to my mama on the cell phone.
- 17 Q So you went back to the backyard?
- 18 A Yeah.
- 19 Q And you were looking at the fence?
- 20 A Yeah.
- 21 Q And you were talking on the phone?
- 22 A To my knowledge, I was on my cell phone. I feel  
23 sure. I ain't a hundred percent sure.
- 24 Q Okay. So you were in the backyard talking on the  
25 phone, looking at the fence?

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

- 1 A Yeah.
- 2 Q And was James with you?
- 3 A No. I don't know where he went. I -- I heard a  
4 noise and I thought it was the lady that he was talking to  
5 on the cell phone.
- 6 Q Okay.
- 7 A And so I don't know how long I was in the backyard.  
8 I really don't.
- 9 Q Okay.
- 10 A And I heard that noise, so I think I got off -- I'm  
11 not a hundred percent sure, but I think I was talking to my  
12 mama.
- 13 Q Okay.
- 14 A But I can't swear to it. I do have really bad  
15 nerves and I can't help it.
- 16 Q Okay.
- 17 A And --
- 18 Q So some time passed, you were in the backyard?
- 19 A Yes, sir.
- 20 Q And at some point in time, what happened next?
- 21 A I went around to the house. My car was right close  
22 to the house.
- 23 Q Right.
- 24 A And I went around there and I seen a window broke.
- 25 THE COURT: You saw what?

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 THE WITNESS: A window broke.

2 BY MR. THOMPSON:

3 Q Okay.

4 A So I -- and so I -- I just went like shock. I  
5 didn't know -- I didn't know what to do.

6 Q Was it fair to say --

7 A I was hollering at my youngin. Huh?

8 Q Is it fair to say you were scared?

9 A Yeah, I was scared. I mean, I got prior burglaries  
10 on my -- you know in my life and I'm on probation. I can't  
11 afford to get in no trouble. I mean I just -- I didn't  
12 know what to do.

13 Q Okay.

14 A So I noticed stuff in my car.

15 Q Did you touch the window?

16 A Yes, sir. I went like that right there and I  
17 hollered, James, James, and he wouldn't answer me.

18 Q Okay.

19 A So I kept -- and finally -- I don't know how long  
20 it was, but he said, yeah, daddy. I said, I said, daddy --  
21 I'm sorry, I said, James, what are you doing. I'm coming,  
22 I'm coming, like that. So I started from the window around  
23 there and he liked to run over me with a microwave in his  
24 hand.

25 Q Okay?

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 A And he threwed it in my car. I didn't know what to  
2 do. I just throwed my hands up. I was -- I don't know  
3 what I done.

4 Q Okay.

5 A And he went around there and jumped in there in the  
6 middle of my car, and I went; and he yelled, Turn to the  
7 right; and then he said, Turn to the left. I remember and  
8 I liked to run into the ditch.

9 Q Okay.

10 A I did not -- I don't know that much about New  
11 Ellenton. I was just down there trying to help my son.  
12 They had cut his lights off. I took my disability check  
13 and got them back on.

14 Q I want you to stay with what happened next, but --

15 A Well, I drove and I went to his house.

16 Q Okay. And when you went to his house --

17 A I got out of the car, went around and the policeman  
18 come around there.

19 Q Okay. Let me -- let me ask you this: Did you go  
20 into the house?

21 A No.

22 Q Did you take anything out of the house?

23 A No, sir.

24 Q All right. And I want you to listen very carefully  
25 to this question. Did you do anything wrong?

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 A Well, if I had to go back, I would have left the  
2 car, him, and everything. But I --

3 Q So you realize you shouldn't have driven off with  
4 it?

5 A Yeah. If you ever have that happen to you, you  
6 would know, but I didn't know what to do. I was wrong by  
7 leaving. I understand that now, but I done everything I  
8 could do. I told the police where the stuff was.

9 Q And you told them the truth?

10 A I told them the truth.

11 Q Okay. Okay.

12 MR. THOMPSON: I have no further questions for the  
13 witness.

14 Please answer any questions Mr. Miller has for you.

15 CROSS-EXAMINATION

16 BY MR. MILLER:

17 Q Let's start with what we can agree on.

18 A Yes, sir.

19 Q You were present at [REDACTED] Avenue during a  
20 burglary?

21 A Yes, sir.

22 Q You were?

23 A Yes, sir.

24 Q Okay. You drove a car filled with stuff that came  
25 out of the house at [REDACTED] Avenue, from [REDACTED] Avenue

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 over to [REDACTED] Avenue?

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q Okay. And it's your testimony before this jury,  
4 under oath, is that you were playing with your  
5 grandchild --

6 A No, no, sir. I was concerned about my grandbaby  
7 with the fence in the back.

8 Q The grandbaby wasn't there?

9 A No, sir.

10 Q I'm sorry. I misunderstood you. You were checking  
11 the perimeter of the property to make sure that if your son  
12 moved there with his grandchild -- with his child, that it  
13 would be safe for her?

14 A Yes, sir.

15 Q That's what you were doing?

16 A Yeah.

17 Q How long did that take you to do?

18 A Sir, I don't know.

19 Q Okay. Well, you say when you came back, the  
20 window's broken out, so you started yelling to your son to  
21 get out of the house, correct?

22 A Yeah.

23 Q Why did you put your hands on the glass and cut  
24 your hands if you were yelling to your son? Why didn't you  
25 just stand outside the window and yell in? Why would you

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 put your hands on the glass?

2 A I don't know.

3 Q But that was your testimony, that you just put your  
4 hands on the glass, correct?

5 A To my knowledge, yes, sir.

6 Q Do you remember the first conversation that you had  
7 with your son when your son was out of jail and you were  
8 still in jail?

9 A No, sir.

10 Q Okay. Would it help your memory if I told you that  
11 it was on September 29th and it was when your son told you  
12 that he had been using your debit card since he'd been out  
13 of jail. You remember that conversation?

14 A Yeah, I think, yes, sir.

15 Q Okay. Do you remember telling your son, I broke  
16 that window out trying to get you out of the house? Do you  
17 remember telling him that?

18 A I'm sure I must have.

19 Q Okay. You must have. Well, did you break the  
20 window out trying to get him out of the house and that's  
21 how you got the cuts on your hand or did you put your hands  
22 up against the window that was already broken and that's  
23 how you got the cuts on the hand?

24 A I just went like that, though. The window was  
25 already broke.

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 Q Sure. Now, you've talked up here about prior  
2 burglary convictions that you have.

3 A Yes, sir.

4 Q You know what a burglary is?

5 A Yes, sir.

6 Q Okay. Why didn't you leave?

7 A I don't know.

8 Q You said your son almost ran you over with the  
9 microwave?

10 A Yes, sir.

11 Q Who put the grill and the smoker in the trunk?

12 A That was in there when I got around the house.

13 Q How did the trunk get open?

14 A I don't know. My trunk thing is broke.

15 Q Okay. Broken trunk thing. That's how you get into  
16 it without the key.

17 Where was the grill, smoker -- this thing here in  
18 this picture right here? Where was this item in your car?

19 A I don't know.

20 Q You don't know?

21 A No.

22 Q Okay. So it's your testimony is that you didn't  
23 take it out of the trunk of the car and put it right there  
24 on the porch where Officer Spires said --

25 A To my knowledge, I didn't, sir. It's got two decks

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 there at my son's house and that -- to my knowledge, that's  
2 his smoker that's up there, up to the higher deck.

3 Q You don't know anything about that smoker, huh?  
4 You know nothing about it?

5 A No, sir, I don't.

6 Q Don't know where it came from?

7 A No. I do now. From the -- from the patrol.

8 Q You don't know how it got propped open in the trunk  
9 of your car when Officer Spires saw it and -- if you took  
10 it out --

11 A My son had me so upset, I didn't know -- I don't --  
12 to my knowledge -- I don't know.

13 Q It's all your son's fault?

14 A No. My fault for not leaving that car.

15 Q So how long did you stand there watching your son  
16 fill up this car with stuff that was stolen out of the  
17 inside of this house?

18 A I'm telling you when I come around there, that's  
19 the way it was. I don't know what he put in that car. All  
20 I know is that microwave was there and that's all I know.  
21 And he was in the middle --

22 Q Was that --

23 A -- and I was arguing with him.

24 Q Well, there was -- the smoker --

25 A Yes, sir.

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 Q -- takes two hands to carry, doesn't it?

2 A I would think so.

3 Q Okay. So that's one trip. Air mattress,  
4 air-conditioning parts, tools all of the stuff that Ms.  
5 Beerman testified too, that's got to be a couple of trips,  
6 wouldn't you think?

7 A I don't know. I didn't see that stuff.

8 Q Okay. Is this the window you cut your hands on  
9 when you were yelling?

10 A Yes, sir, I guess so.

11 Q What's that on top of the microwave right there?

12 A I don't know.

13 Q Here, I'll bring it closer for you?

14 A I don't know what that is.

15 Q It was in your car, correct?

16 A Yes, sir.

17 Q All right. So while your son was doing all this  
18 stuff, what were you doing?

19 A I was in the back on my phone to my knowledge, I  
20 was. I was concerned about my grandbabies. I wasn't even  
21 thinking about him.

22 Q And it's your testimony that you never picked up  
23 that black grill. You never touched it?

24 A My nerves is so bad, I might have, but I don't --  
25 to my knowledge, I didn't.

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

- 1 Q Okay. When the police arrive, Officer Spires --
- 2 A Yes, sir.
- 3 Q -- he asked you where the stuff came from?
- 4 A Yes, sir.
- 5 Q And you didn't tell him right away?
- 6 A Yes, sir.
- 7 Q You did?
- 8 A Uh-huh.
- 9 Q You told him [REDACTED] Avenue, or I'll take you  
10 over there?
- 11 A I said I'll try to help you find -- I don't know  
12 that area.
- 13 Q Well, why did your son --
- 14 A It wasn't that officer, it was the other officer.
- 15 Q The other officer -- Officer, Chief Rushton from  
16 Jackson?
- 17 A It's a big guy.
- 18 Q Okay. So you told Chief Rushton where this had  
19 happened, correct?
- 20 A Uh-huh. He asked me did I know -- could I find  
21 that house and I said, yeah, I'll try.
- 22 Q Okay. But you didn't tell this officer you'd try  
23 to find the house, did you?
- 24 A I don't know, I --
- 25 **MR. THOMPSON:** Objection, relevance.

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 THE COURT: Rephrase the question.

2 BY MR. MILLER:

3 Q How long was it before Chief Rushton showed up  
4 after Officer Spires got there?

5 A All I know is he was there and then the other  
6 officer was in the front of the -- James' house. He was  
7 back -- excuse me, backed up and I went over there talking  
8 to him and I think that officer was with -- talking with my  
9 son.

10 Q Why didn't you drive away when you saw your son was  
11 burglarizing that house?

12 A If I had to do it over, sir, I believe I would. I  
13 don't know why.

14 Q But you do admit that you were present whenever the  
15 burglary occurred?

16 A Yeah, but I didn't know it was -- even doing that.

17 Q You didn't know what the burglary was?

18 A Yes, sir. I said I didn't know what he was doing.

19 Q You said -- wasn't it your testimony that he almost  
20 ran over you with the microwave coming out of the house?

21 A Yeah, after I come around there. I'm talking about  
22 when I was in the back. I didn't know what he was doing.

23 Q And then you drove away?

24 A Yes, sir.

25 Q And you didn't break out the window on the house?

## William Ralph Pearson - Direct Examination by Mr. Thompson

1 A No.

2 Q But you probably told your son when you talked to  
3 him from the jail on the recorded phone call that you had  
4 broken the window on the house because you were trying to  
5 get him out of there?

6 A I don't know. I mean --

7 Q We can play the phone call, if you want.

8 A Well, that's -- I mean -- I'm not denying that I  
9 did. I may have broke it or leaning up against it --  
10 either way, I don't know how it happened.

11 Q So you might have broken it leaning up against it  
12 which would account for the cuts on your hand or you might  
13 have gotten the cuts on your hand when you were yelling  
14 through it because it was all ready broken.

15 (WHEREUPON there was a pause in the proceedings.)

16 MR. MILLER: No further questions, Your Honor.

17 MR. THOMPSON: No redirect, Your Honor.

18 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Pearson, you may step  
19 down.

20 Any additional witnesses?

21 MR. THOMPSON: None from the defense, Your Honor.

22 THE COURT: Anything on reply?

23 MR. MILLER: Your Honor, if we could have one  
24 minute?

25 (WHEREUPON there was a pause in the proceedings.)

1           **MR. MILLER:** Nothing in reply, Your Honor.

2           **THE COURT:** Thank you.

3           All right. Mr. Foreman, ladies and gentlemen,  
4 we're going to break for lunch. I'm going to let you walk  
5 up -- anybody have any problem walking? We're going to  
6 walk up to the Bowery. Y'all order your lunch, nothing  
7 alcoholic. Ms. Barbara is going to pay for it.

8           You going with us, Ms. Barbara?

9           **THE BAILIFF:** No, Ms. Jimmy and Mert's going.

10          **THE COURT:** Ms. Jimmy and Mr. Mert's going. So  
11 they'll pay.

12          Anyway, we're going to start back about 2:15. I  
13 know that's a little bit long, but we've got about three or  
14 four things during lunch. I don't want you having to wait  
15 on me. And we'll start right at 2:15. So if you get back  
16 and it's not 2:15, you want to tarry around outside and  
17 enjoy the beautiful day, do that. I'll see you at 2:15.

18          Please don't discuss the case. Don't deliberate  
19 and don't let anybody talk about it with you. Go with  
20 Ms. Barbara. Enjoy your lunch. Be sure and thank Mert  
21 because he's got the credit card.

22          (WHEREUPON the jury left the courtroom at 12:22  
23 p.m.)

24          **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, may it please the Court,  
25 at this point in time, I'd like to make a --



1 there is a failure of competent evidence tending to prove  
2 the charge in the indictment, period. In ruling on the  
3 motion, the trial judge shall consider only the existence  
4 or nonexistence of the evidence and not its weight. So go  
5 ahead and tell me what I should do.

6 **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, again, this rule says  
7 the existence of competent evidence.

8 **THE COURT:** It does say that, but it goes to the  
9 other sentence and says, in ruling I shall consider only  
10 not competent, but the evidence or nonexistence of the  
11 evidence, not its weight.

12 **MR. THOMPSON:** Yes, sir.

13 **THE COURT:** So in one sentence it says competent  
14 evidence, in the next one it says only the weight and not  
15 the existence or nonexistence.

16 **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, I would argue that this  
17 is more than just the threshold, though, of probable cause.  
18 This is competent evidence, tending to be able to prove the  
19 charge and --

20 **THE COURT:** Well, there -- your client's son says  
21 he, being your client, was the one who did the break in,  
22 did the burglary. There is evidence that your client did  
23 the burglary. Is that competent evidence? I think that's  
24 for the jury to judge its credibility, not me. If I had to  
25 judge his credibility, I know what I would do, but I'm not

1 sitting on the jury and I'm not the judge of the facts; and  
2 even if I found that not to be competent evidence, there's  
3 still the existence of that evidence.

4 So how do I reconcile those two things?

5 **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, I would just argue that  
6 the State's evidence in this trial -- I would agree with  
7 you, it really does boil down to the testimony of James  
8 Pearson. The -- other than the testimony of James Pearson,  
9 there's really no other evidence that --

10 (WHEREUPON there was a pause in the proceedings.)

11 **THE COURT:** Go ahead.

12 **MR. THOMPSON:** There's really no other evidence  
13 that he actually entered the home or that he actually  
14 has -- that the State's met all of the evidence of the  
15 charge against him.

16 **THE COURT:** Well, if I believe the son, have they  
17 not? Entering the dwelling, taking the stuff out.

18 **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, I'm trying to remember  
19 which --

20 **THE COURT:** I'm treating your motion right now as  
21 if Mr. Pearson, the defendant, has not testified. So the  
22 only thing that we can consider would be the testimony of  
23 the son, James Pearson, who said what I just said he said,  
24 plus the circumstantial evidence of the police officer  
25 showing -- or riding up with your client removing the

1 smoker, grill with blood on his hands, the car full of  
2 items owned by the renter --

3 MR. MILLER: Ms. Beerman, Your Honor.

4 THE COURT: Ms. Beerman. There's a lot of  
5 circumstantial evidence there.

6 MR. THOMPSON: Right. Your Honor, I would agree.

7 THE COURT: How do I get around all that?

8 MR. THOMPSON: I would agree with the Court that  
9 there is some circumstantial evidence that he was at some  
10 point involved with the return to the home and I would  
11 agree with the Court that the defendant -- that James  
12 Pearson, the State's witness, did testify and I understand  
13 that the Court can't consider the weight of the evidence;  
14 however, the rule does say that it has to be competent  
15 evidence and I would submit to the Court there is no way  
16 that a reasonable jury even at the close of the State's  
17 case would find any of James Pearson's testimony to be  
18 credible; and therefore, the evidence is not competent.

19 THE COURT: Well, the case law says, it is the duty  
20 of the trial court to submit the case to the jury if there  
21 is any evidence -- either direct or circumstantial which  
22 reasonably tends to prove the guilt of the accused or from  
23 which guilt may be fairly and logically deduced. And then  
24 it says unless there's a total failure of competent  
25 evidence as to the charges alleged. It is the duty of the

1 trial court to direct a verdict if acquittal is not errant.

2 So I'm going to -- I'm going to apply the rule in  
3 the case and I am not concerned with the weight of it, but  
4 the existence of it and there is an existence. There was  
5 testimony from the police officer that was circumstantial  
6 and then there's direct evidence of the son. As I told the  
7 jury, sometimes you'll have one say one thing and one the  
8 other. So they've got to make the determination of the  
9 credibility of these two witnesses. So I most respectfully  
10 deny your motion for directed verdict at the point.

11 And I do that, quite honestly with both of you,  
12 with some reservation. I'm concerned about the existence  
13 of competent evidence, but the same token, the rules say if  
14 there's any evidence. I will consider -- I don't consider  
15 the weight of it, only the existence of it. So there is an  
16 existence of evidence that would -- should be considered by  
17 the jury. So I'll respectfully deny your motion for  
18 directed verdict.

19 **MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Your Honor. At this  
20 point in time, I would like to -- at the close of the  
21 State's case, the defense does rest at this time and we  
22 also at this point in time renew our motion for directed  
23 verdict.

24 **THE COURT:** At the conclusion of your case?

25 **MR. THOMPSON:** That's correct, Your Honor. And we

1 do rest. The defense does rest. I would submit to the  
2 Court that after the defense's case, that the State's  
3 witness, the key witness, James Pearson is even less  
4 credible, that he absolutely -- he said he didn't even know  
5 Mr. Sikes, that he's even less credible, that the testimony  
6 of Mr. Ralph Pearson does tend to fit the circumstantial  
7 evidence in this case and I would argue that it is a  
8 stretch to think that any reasonable juror would be able to  
9 believe the State's key witness in the case.

10 **THE COURT:** Well, I know it's a stretch, but that's  
11 their job. And you can argue that all day long, but it  
12 might be a stretch to believe that guy, but it's their job  
13 to judge the credibility and now they've got -- even  
14 with -- at the end of your case, the defense case, they've  
15 got the added testimony to look at.

16 Number one, the credibility of your witness or your  
17 defendant and then -- I just don't -- there is evidence in  
18 the record that they have to judge the weight and the  
19 credibility of the witnesses. So I'm going to -- with  
20 great -- I'm going to respectfully deny the motion.

21 We'll stand at ease now until -- we have a 1:30  
22 hearing -- we'll start back at 1:30.

23 (WHEREUPON the case was in recess for lunch and for  
24 another hearing to take place.)

25 **THE COURT:** Mr. Thompson, are you ready to proceed?

1 MR. THOMPSON: Yes, sir.

2 THE COURT: State are you ready?

3 MR. MILLER: Yes, Your Honor.

4 THE COURT: All right. We're going to argue and  
5 I'm going to charge and then we'll take that plea.

6 All right. Mr. Thompson, you get your client out  
7 here, please.

8 (WHEREUPON the defendant entered the courtroom.)

9 MR. MILLER: And Your Honor, if we could do one  
10 very brief matter before the jury comes in.

11 THE COURT: All right. Gentlemen, my charge will  
12 be my standard charge on the duties of judge and the jury,  
13 burden of proof, reasonable doubt, credibility of  
14 witnesses, prior record of the defendant, impeachment  
15 purposes only and burglary first, mere -- hand of one is  
16 the hand of all.

17 MR. MILLER: Yes, Your Honor.

18 THE COURT: Mere presence.

19 MR. MILLER: The defense has handed up a proposed  
20 jury charge on mere presence and the State would not object  
21 to that mere presence charge, Your Honor.

22 THE COURT: And hand of one is the hand of all?

23 MR. MILLER: Yes, sir.

24 THE COURT: Anything else that the State requests?

25 MR. MILLER: Nothing else from the State, Your

1 Honor.

2 THE COURT: Mr. Barry Thompson?

3 MR. THOMPSON: Nothing from the defense, Your  
4 Honor.

5 THE COURT: All right. We need the verdict form,  
6 Mr. Clerk.

7 Anything else?

8 MR. MILLER: Nothing from the State, Your Honor.

9 THE COURT: You going to waive opening on the law?

10 MR. MILLER: Yes, sir.

11 THE COURT: Y'all weren't able to do anything over  
12 the lunch break?

13 MR. MILLER: Get ready for closing, Your Honor.

14 THE COURT: All right. Bring the jury in, please.

15 (WHEREUPON the jury entered the courtroom at 2:09  
16 p.m.)

17 THE COURT: Mr. Foreman, ladies and gentlemen of  
18 the jury, everything good at lunch?

19 THE JUROR: Yes. Fruit chicken.

20 THE COURT: Should I judge your credibility?

21 All right. Ladies and gentlemen, we have reached  
22 the stage of the trial now where the final arguments are  
23 going to be made. Mr. Thompson will go first followed by  
24 Mr. Miller and then I will instruct you on the law and it  
25 will be turned over to you for your deliberations. As I

1 said, closing arguments, like opening statements, that is  
2 not evidence in the case. These lawyers will be arguing in  
3 the light most favorable to their clients for the State and  
4 their client.

5 So please pay close attention and then once they're  
6 finished, I'll -- my charge is not very long. Y'all will  
7 have the case here shortly.

8 Mr. Thompson?

9 **CLOSING ARGUMENTS**

10 **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, may it please the Court?

11 **THE COURT:** Absolutely.

12 **MR. THOMPSON:** Mr. Miller, Mr. Grimes, ladies and  
13 gentlemen, I think I kind of think in pictures. And I  
14 think if you wanted to really sum up this case, I really  
15 like the picture that Officer Spires painted when he comes  
16 to the house and he comes around the back and he looks and  
17 there's Mr. Ralph, there's his son, James, and he asks the  
18 obvious question, What are you doing. Ralph looks to his  
19 son and waits for him to tell the truth. And instead, he  
20 gets this wild look in his eyes and he starts to lie. And  
21 that's kind of what happened here today; and it's important  
22 because he's really the key to the State's case.

23 The State has the burden of proof to prove all of  
24 the elements of the offense of burglary. And the judge is  
25 going to tell you what the law is as far as all the

1 different elements and I don't want to do that. You should  
2 certainly listen to the judge when he tells you that. But  
3 the -- one of the elements of the crime of burglary is you  
4 have to go in the house or you have to actually had some  
5 kind of intent to burglarize or you have to be part of the  
6 deal. You have to be kind of part of the plan or know  
7 what's going on.

8           The victim, who's a really nice lady -- I'm real  
9 sorry this happened to her -- but she really doesn't know  
10 what happened. She's in Florida.

11           Now, afterwards, she knows that her house has been  
12 broken into. But she doesn't know who's in her house.  
13 She's not here. She doesn't know anything. Officer  
14 Spires, he can talk to you about his investigation; and he  
15 can talk to you about what he finds when he comes to the  
16 Pearson house; and he can talk about what's in the car and  
17 about what people say. But he wasn't there either.

18           The only person who claims to know what happened at  
19 the house was James Pearson. And the only problem with  
20 that is this -- and I want to be very, very clear about  
21 this and this is usually not something that people like to  
22 say in a polite society, but here goes: James is a liar.  
23 James is a liar. James lied to Officer Spires, he took him  
24 on this bunny rabbit hunt, going and looking for where did  
25 the stuff come from. James lied to his father. He lied to

1 us here today. He got on the witness stand and said, I  
2 don't even know who Jimmy Sikes is. Well, Jimmy Sikes  
3 comes in and says, Yeah, I know him; he was in the pod with  
4 me in the detention center.

5 He's actually -- he's lied here today. He's  
6 actually convicted of lying to the police, not once, but  
7 twice on his criminal record. He's lied to the police and  
8 we talked about that. I asked him about that on the  
9 witness stand and he had to admit, yes, I lied to the  
10 police. I've been convicted of lying to the police. He's  
11 a liar. Always has been.

12 But most do things for reasons. In common sense  
13 kind of vernacular, most people do what they do for a  
14 reason. So why do we lie? Why would he lie? What  
15 possible reason could he have to lie? It's because he's  
16 facing ten years in prison. That's why he has a reason to  
17 lie. He's got ten years of prison he 's looking at. He  
18 gets probation, but he's a drug addict, so he gets caught  
19 again. He was here today in the court in a red jumpsuit  
20 because he's been arrested again. We talked with him about  
21 that. I forget which drug he said he'd been arrested for  
22 this time, but that's the reason he lied. He's looking to  
23 get out of stuff and he's dodging as hard as he can, just  
24 like he was when Officer Detroit Spires came and questioned  
25 him the first time. He's a liar. And I would argue to you

1 that you shouldn't believe him. You have every reason in  
2 the world not to believe this man. He is a liar.

3 We could stop there. That's really the key to  
4 their case, is the testimony of this liar. We could stop  
5 there and I would submit to you that at that point there's  
6 more than a reasonable doubt as to whether or not  
7 Mr. Ralph's guilty or not. The burden is on the State.  
8 They've got a key witness that can't be trusted. And you  
9 should find Ralph not guilty. He doesn't have to prove  
10 anything. And he's innocent until proven guilty. But he  
11 wanted to testify. So he got up on the witness stand and I  
12 submit to you he told the truth. He was honest with you  
13 about his record. He told you, Yeah, I've pleaded guilty  
14 to burglary before and every other time I've been charged  
15 with burglary, I've manned up and I sat there and I said,  
16 yes, I did it.

17 We talked about why we're here today. Why not  
18 plead guilty today and he told you why: Because I didn't  
19 do it. I'm not guilty.

20 We talked about why he was at the house and he said  
21 his story was, Well, I drove to the house because my son  
22 told me that he needed to go find another house to rent.  
23 And you heard other pieces of evidence that support his  
24 story. Officer Spires told you he'd been there earlier  
25 that day and there's some kind of disturbance, he's having

1 trouble with where he's at. You heard the victim talk  
2 about, Yeah, the house is for rent.

3 Mr. Pearson got on the phone, he even remembers a  
4 little bit the conversation -- remembers a little bit about  
5 how much they were talking about charging rent for the  
6 house. His state of mind and his intent is important for  
7 crime. Your state of mind is important. His state of mind  
8 and his intent when he's going over to the house is to help  
9 his son look at the house that's for rent. We talked about  
10 what he was doing while his son was robbing the house. And  
11 he told you that he went to the backyard because he was  
12 concerned about there being a street behind that house.  
13 And I encourage you to look at the pictures. I think one  
14 of them -- beg the Court's indulgence just a moment.

15 (WHEREUPON there was a pause in the proceedings.)

16 MR. THOMPSON: One of them is an aerial paragraph.  
17 It's going to show you who's telling the truth. There's a  
18 street behind the house and he was looking at the fence.  
19 He talked to you about how you know I was back there, his  
20 mama called. He was talking to his mother on the telephone  
21 and he really doesn't remember how long he's back there,  
22 standing in the backyard talking to his mom because he  
23 thinks his son is meeting with whoever the landlord is and  
24 looking at the house.

25 We talked about going around to the front and he

1 told you about how he cut his hand. You can look at the  
2 pictures and you can tell that's not how people got into  
3 the house. You can look at this. But he told you about  
4 how he cut his hand. He also told you what he did wrong.  
5 He got up on the stand and frankly admitted to being an  
6 accessory after the fact, after this burglary has occurred,  
7 after it's over with, he admitted to you, you know, I  
8 should have walked away. I should have just left his  
9 behind there at the house and left that car, just walked  
10 away; but instead, I was scared for my son and I get in the  
11 car and we drove off. And he told you that he knows that  
12 was wrong.

13 Now, that's not the charge we're here about today.  
14 It's not the charge we're here about today. You're going  
15 to hear a little bit, probably from Mr. Miller, probably  
16 about accessory. To be an accessory before the fact, you  
17 have to be somebody who's kind of participating or  
18 assisting somehow the actual burglary. He really starts  
19 his -- he really screws up after the burglary is over. But  
20 he told you about what he said to the police. He's the one  
21 that told the police the truth. While Mr. James Pearson is  
22 leading Officer Spires on this wild goose chase, Ralph  
23 says, Yeah, I know where the house is, I'll take you. And  
24 he was honest with him and he told the truth. And at each  
25 point, he's got up and he's told the truth. I mean he's

1 got his problems, but he's gotten up and he's told you the  
2 truth.

3 He's not a saint. But he's not guilty of burglary,  
4 which is the question that we're here to answer today. He  
5 said he didn't go in. He didn't have anything to do with  
6 the plan or the intent. Didn't cooperate with his son in  
7 any way other than being an accessory after the fact. And  
8 you should find him not guilty.

9 In just a second I expect Mr. Miller's going to get  
10 up and he's going to tell you something that's really  
11 tricky. He mentioned this is his opening statement. He  
12 said, you know, this is not a perfect world and it's not a  
13 TV show. This is not CSI, there's not going to be a point  
14 at which there's going to be some kind of DNA or some kind  
15 of strange forensic evidence that -- but you should at  
16 least expect fingerprints. There -- there's no evidence of  
17 any even attempt to fingerprint any of the items in the  
18 car. And I know they say that one of the windows is out of  
19 the car, but it's not raining inside the car and it's not  
20 raining inside the house. There's no intent to get a  
21 fingerprint on the inside of the house. You should expect  
22 more than just the testimony of a liar.

23 And that's really the only real evidence against  
24 him today. He's not guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. I  
25 would argue to you that he's probably not guilty beyond a

1 probable doubt, if there is such a thing. You should  
2 expect more. Mr. Ralph deserves better and he's not  
3 guilty. Thank you.

4           **MR. MILLER:** Thank you, Your Honor, Mr. Thompson,  
5 ladies and gentlemen, we prepare for these cases and  
6 prepare for these arguments and we all kind of have an idea  
7 of what we think is going to happen, what we think is  
8 going to come out from the witness stand, what we think we  
9 are going to argue. And then inevitably, if I'm going  
10 last, the defense says stuff that I can't let go. I have  
11 to end up starting with that.

12           Let's start with some law. That's going to come  
13 from the judge. Mr. Thompson -- and I don't for a second  
14 think he did this intentionally, but he misstated the law.  
15 The law does not require someone to go into the house for  
16 them to be convicted of burglary. Simple as that. There  
17 is no requirement that we prove he went into that house.  
18 But he said, wait a minute, they didn't prove -- the only  
19 person who claims to have any knowledge about what happened  
20 in that house is James Pearson. That's not accurate.  
21 Ralph Pearson claims to have knowledge of what happened at  
22 that house. And the judge is going to tell you for us to  
23 prove somebody guilty of committing an offense, we have to  
24 prove to you that the person was a participant in the  
25 crime. He's going to say that person must personally

1 commit the crime or be present at the scene and  
2 intentionally aid, abet, or assist in the commission of  
3 that crime through some overt act.

4 Think about this, ladies and gentlemen, the person  
5 who acts as the lookout during the burglary is just as  
6 guilty as the person who's inside the house. The person  
7 who drives the get away vehicle for the burglary is just as  
8 guilty as the guy who was in the house. This is defense's  
9 problem. The defense's problem is that he has no burden,  
10 but he chose to testify. This is the defense's problem.  
11 The defense's problem is Mr. Thompson just sat up here and  
12 through 90 percent of his closing statement, he talked  
13 about James Pearson and how he's not credible.

14 The defense's problem is, even if you believe Ralph  
15 Pearson's story, he's still guilty of burglary in the  
16 first-degree. And here's why: James Pearson didn't get  
17 some kind of sweetheart deal whenever he pled. He's  
18 charged for exactly the same thing his father is charged  
19 with. Ralph Pearson and James Pearson are charged with the  
20 same thing.

21 Well, Mr. Thompson talks about he's only charged  
22 with burglary in the second degree, not burglary in the  
23 first-degree. Why? Because Ralph Pearson has two prior  
24 convictions for burglary. He has a burglary in '05, he had  
25 a burglary in 2009. That's why they're treated

1 differently. James Pearson didn't have that record.  
2 That's why he pled to burglary second and that's why he was  
3 charged with burglary second, number one.

4           Number two, you, as the jury, have to rely on your  
5 recollection, and the court reporter can help with that,  
6 but you have to rely on your recollection of the testimony  
7 that you heard. Jimmy Sikes didn't sit up here and tell  
8 you that he was in the same pod with James at Aiken County  
9 Detention Center. Jimmy Sikes told you that he was in that  
10 holding cell back there. One day with James Pearson. And  
11 supposedly, according to Jimmy Sikes he tells him something  
12 that makes absolutely no sense: Tell my dad not to worry,  
13 I'm going to take the heat for all of it, he never got out  
14 of the car.

15           Why would he tell -- convey that message. If his  
16 dad really never got out of the car, if his dad really  
17 didn't have anything to do with it, why would he convey  
18 that message to his dad? And what's more, how did William  
19 Pearson ever find out about it? Ralph Pearson. Ralph and  
20 Jimmy Sikes are together in the jail. That's how Ralph  
21 Pearson finds out about it. That's how Jimmy Sikes knows  
22 what to come up here and say. Oh, his son admitted to me  
23 he didn't have anything to do with it. If that's the case,  
24 why is Ralph Pearson worried about it if he didn't have  
25 anything to do with it.

1           You know, ladies and gentlemen, liars are deceived  
2 by their words. A liar is a liar. That doesn't mean that  
3 they can't tell the truth. The judge is going to tell you  
4 when you're weighing the credibility, you can believe all  
5 of what somebody says, you can believe none of what  
6 somebody says or you can believe part of what somebody  
7 says.

8           And here is the only thing that James Pearson and  
9 Ralph Pearson disagree about. James Pearson says Ralph was  
10 inside the house handing him stuff. And Ralph Pearson  
11 says, I was standing there watching him pull all of the  
12 stuff out of the house. He also -- I think the testimony  
13 was he almost ran over me with the microwave coming out of  
14 the house to load it into the car. Well, you'll have these  
15 photographs back there. That wasn't one trip to load up  
16 that car. It wasn't two trips to load up that car. How  
17 many trips does it take to load up a Mercury with this much  
18 stuff? And that's where the defense's case failed.  
19 Because even if -- even if you don't believe anything that  
20 James Pearson said from that stand, Ralph Pearson's  
21 testimony says he's guilty. Ralph Pearson's testimony says  
22 that he, knowing that a crime was occurring and while he  
23 was present at the scene, intentionally aided, abetted, or  
24 assisted in the commission of that crime for some overt  
25 act. He drove the car away. He drove the get away car.

1 Ladies and gentlemen, I told you at the beginning  
2 of this trial that you have to apply common sense to these  
3 cases. You have to apply common sense when you're  
4 listening to all this testimony and you're looking at all  
5 of this evidence. Think about the timeline from Officer  
6 Spires. He's at the [REDACTED] Street address. Within 45  
7 minutes, that car is loaded down and he sees them driving  
8 on Old Whiskey Road. So that means that within the 45  
9 minutes, according to Ralph Pearson, James Pearson has a  
10 conversation with the landlord at his house, gets his dad,  
11 who convinces his dad to drive him over to the house,  
12 commits a burglary at the house. Then Ralph says, I had no  
13 idea it was going to happen.

14 Nobody -- there's no testimony from anybody that  
15 says they planned while they were at [REDACTED] Street to go  
16 over and rob this house on [REDACTED], to burglarize this house.  
17 It was, in what they call in military terms, a target of  
18 opportunity. They got over there, found out that they  
19 could get into the house and they burglarized the house.  
20 They took stuff out of it. They took Ms. Beerman's stuff  
21 and Mr. Hinds' stuff out of that house. They loaded it  
22 into the car. And it doesn't matter if Ralph Pearson is  
23 around back making sure nobody sees them driving by along  
24 Whiskey Road. You can see where it is on the overhead. It  
25 doesn't matter if he's standing in the front yard, making

1 sure nobody's coming down the street. It doesn't matter,  
2 ladies and gentlemen, if he's over there on the side  
3 waiting on the car to get loaded.

4           But let's think about Ralph Pearson's testimony.  
5 He doesn't have the burden of proof, but he chose to  
6 testify. So you as the finders of fact have to determine  
7 what is his credibility. His credibility. He comes up  
8 with a story of, I saw the broken window, so I put my hands  
9 on it so I could yell through it. Use your common sense.  
10 Who does that? And then I asked him on cross-examination,  
11 isn't it true that in a recorded phone call from the jail,  
12 you said to your son, I broke that window out trying to get  
13 you out of the house. Well, yeah, I could have said that.  
14 And then later on, it became, maybe I did break the window.  
15 It's not credible. It is not credible to believe that the  
16 cuts that came from his hands were made by that window  
17 glass because he was holding his hands up so he could yell  
18 through the window. It's not credible.

19           Ladies and gentlemen, I submit to you that 90  
20 percent of what he said was true. But the only reason it  
21 was, was because he knew that he had to explain the  
22 evidence. He has to explain the fact that he was seen  
23 driving the car with all the stuff in it and his son beside  
24 him. His son has pled guilty, which means he's confessed  
25 to going into the house.

1           So now, I'm in the car, with somebody who's already  
2     pled guilty to burglary and I have all the stuff that's  
3     stolen from the house in my car. Not just passing by  
4     Officer Spires at some rate of speed, but when Officer  
5     Spires gets to my house, where I live, he sees me with the  
6     grill. Again, credibility. He can remember the fact that  
7     he was in the backyard because he wanted to check the fence  
8     because he loves his granddaughter so much. Loves his  
9     grandchildren so much. I don't doubt that he loves his  
10    grandchildren, but he can't remember if when Officer Spires  
11    walked around the house if he was the one that was sitting  
12    there putting the grill up onto the deck. He can't  
13    remember if he told his son that I was the one that broke  
14    out the window. He doesn't remember what the excuse for  
15    breaking out the window was. If it doesn't suit his story,  
16    he doesn't remember it. Or he's got bad nerves or he gets  
17    real upset. You can judge their demeanor on the stand.

18           So let's look back to James and look at his  
19    demeanor. He's embarrassed. He's upset. He doesn't want  
20    to be here. He gains absolutely nothing by being here.  
21    He's already gotten what he's going to get. What's going  
22    to happen with him has already happened. There is nothing  
23    he can do in this case that is going to help him because  
24    it's already been done. It was done when he pled.

25           So here he is up here knowing he's got to tell the

1 truth and he's testifying against his father and that is a  
2 terrible, terrible consequence of his actions. But, ladies  
3 and gentlemen, life is about consequences or actions. If  
4 Mr. Pearson, Mr. Ralph Pearson had walked away from that  
5 house when he saw all of that stuff being loaded into the  
6 car, we wouldn't be here today. If Mr. Ralph Pearson had  
7 gotten into that car and driven away while his son was  
8 inside, there's a reasonable chance that Corporal Spires  
9 would never have seen him. He was driving down the road  
10 when they passed him. But he waited. He waited until his  
11 son had loaded all the stuff in the car that they could get  
12 in the car, then he got his son in the car and he drove  
13 away.

14 And you heard Officer Spires' testimony. He didn't  
15 get in the car and start driving away and the son said, I  
16 better jump in the car because dad's leaving me. All of  
17 that stuff was in the passenger seat. The son had to get  
18 in first and he had to get in behind him. When they were  
19 done burglarizing the house, that's when they left. It's  
20 common sense.

21 There's some more common sense. Officer Spires  
22 says, I took the son because he said he was going to take  
23 me where he'd gotten the stuff from. You know, what's  
24 Ralph going to do if the son is actually going to take  
25 Corporal Spires where the burglary took place, he's going

1 to look bad. So Dad says to Chief Rushton, I think I can  
2 find it. I think I can take you over there. He doesn't  
3 know how to get around in this three block area of New  
4 Ellenton, South Carolina, but maybe I can find it. It was  
5 self-serving. It was self-serving from the beginning. It  
6 was self-serving from the beginning because Ralph Pearson  
7 intended to hang his son out for this. He intended for his  
8 son to go down for it. He did everything in his power to  
9 make sure that his son would go down on it, including after  
10 his son got out and him telling his son, Look, tell them I  
11 didn't go in there, tell them I didn't go in there. It's  
12 okay. You need my debit card, you need some money? That's  
13 okay. James Pearson said that happened; Ralph Pearson said  
14 that happened.

15 Ladies and gentlemen, the defense would love for  
16 you to believe that James Pearson is the key to the State's  
17 case. But James Pearson is not the key to the State's  
18 case. The key to the State's case is Corporal Detroit  
19 Spires. The icing on the State's case is Ralph Pearson.  
20 Ralph Pearson admits to being there. Ralph Pearson admits  
21 to seeing the burglary occurring. Ralph Pearson admits to  
22 then driving away from the scene of the burglary with the  
23 person he says perpetrated the crime in this car. He's  
24 just as guilty of the crime as James Pearson was.

25 Mr. Thompson stated that for you to find

1 Mr. Pearson guilty of burglary, you have to find he was  
2 part of the deal that he was part of the plan, that he knew  
3 what was going on. Ladies and gentlemen, I submit to you  
4 his own testimony was that he knew what was going on. He  
5 said it himself from the stand. He'd seen burglaries  
6 before. He knew what a burglary was.

7 But he made that choice. He made the choice to aid  
8 and assist or abet his son in getting away. Here's another  
9 choice he could have made: As his son was carrying stuff  
10 out to the car, according to his testimony, his son goes  
11 in, he carries stuff out to the car and puts it in the car,  
12 he could have taken stuff out of the car and puts it in the  
13 yard. He could have just sat it right there. I'm not  
14 doing this. You're not doing this. It is disgusting and  
15 pathetic that this is the father/son relationship that  
16 exists in this family. It should be heartbreaking to watch  
17 a son testify against his father in such a serious, serious  
18 matter. But, ladies and gentlemen, this is where he's  
19 from. Right here. You know, we can't call the preacher  
20 from St. Mary's over here to testify about the burglary he  
21 participated in with Mr. Pearson because it didn't happen.  
22 Thieves hang together. But when the chips are down and  
23 when it's time to look out for number one, number one does  
24 look out for number one. Mr. Thompson wants you to believe  
25 that it's shocking that a criminal defendant would get up

1 here and say that the person who was also charged in the  
2 crime wasn't a participate in the crime. There's no honor  
3 among thieves. That's what James Pearson is. He's a  
4 thief. He's an admitted thief. He's a liar. That doesn't  
5 mean that everything he says has to be a lie. And that's a  
6 credibility and determination for you guys to make.

7 Do you believe that Mr. Pearson, Mr. Ralph Pearson,  
8 went to that house, was shocked to discover it was being  
9 burglarized and then did absolutely nothing in furtherance  
10 of that burglary? If that is what you believe, if you find  
11 Mr. Pearson's testimony, Mr. Ralph Pearson's testimony to  
12 be credible on that issue -- what did you do while the  
13 burglary was going on? If you find him to be credible,  
14 I'll tell you right now, you should go back there and find  
15 him not guilty. You should find him not guilty if you find  
16 it credible that he did nothing in furtherance of this  
17 burglary.

18 The problem with that is, to find him credible on  
19 that issue, you have to find he was not credible on the  
20 issue of then I got into the car with him and I drove away.  
21 Because James Pearson doesn't get away without him driving.  
22 He doesn't get away without him driving.

23 You know, ladies and gentlemen, we don't always  
24 have the opportunity to do all of the things that we want  
25 done in every case. There are some places that have

1 surveillance videos. That's not the case here. There are  
2 some places where there are multiple eyewitnesss. That's  
3 not the case here. The fact of the matter is, this crime  
4 was committed with two people present and the only  
5 difference between their testimony is James Pearson says he  
6 was in the house, Ralph was in the house and Ralph says I  
7 wasn't in the house. Ladies and gentlemen, I submit to  
8 you, it doesn't matter.

9           Decide who you believe. Decide if you believe the  
10 defendant. If you don't believe that the defendant wasn't  
11 an active -- or if you don't believe that the defendant was  
12 an active participant in this, then you should find him not  
13 guilty. But if you apply your common sense to what you've  
14 heard up here, you're going to understand he was an active  
15 participant in this. Did he go in the house? It really  
16 doesn't matter.

17           Your verdict form is going to have two choices on  
18 it, guilty and not guilty. You don't have to say you  
19 believe James. You don't have to say you don't believe  
20 Ralph. The facts are these: A burglary occurred at 313  
21 [REDACTED] Avenue. Ralph was there for it. Ralph watched it  
22 happen, knew it was going on and at the end of that  
23 burglary, was the way that they got away. There is no  
24 doubt that all of those things happened. It is  
25 unfortunate. It is sad, but you as the conscience of this

1 community need to hold Ralph Pearson responsible for the  
2 choices he made that day and you do that through finding  
3 him guilty. Thank you.

4 **THE COURT:** Mr. Foreman, my instructions or charge  
5 is maybe ten minutes. Are y'all okay without a bathroom  
6 break? Everything fine?

7 (WHEREUPON there was an indication that the jury  
8 was fine.)

9 **JURY CHARGE**

10 **THE COURT:** Mr. Foreman, ladies and gentlemen, let  
11 me remind you that the defendant was arrested, charged and  
12 indicted in this case is not evidence in the case and  
13 cannot be considered by you of evidence of guilt in the  
14 case nor does it create any presumption of innocence or  
15 inference of guilt. The indictment, as I told you, is  
16 simply the document by which this case comes into the  
17 Court. It contains the formal charges against the  
18 defendant.

19 As to this indictment for burglary in the  
20 first-degree, the defendant has pled not guilty and that  
21 plea, as I told you, of not guilty puts the burden on the  
22 State of South Carolina to prove the defendant guilty  
23 beyond a reasonable doubt. A person charged with  
24 committing a criminal offense in South Carolina is never  
25 required to prove himself innocent. I charge you that it

1 is an important rule of constitutional law that a defendant  
2 in a criminal trial, no matter how serious the crime may be  
3 will always be presumed to be innocent of the crime for  
4 which the indictment was issued unless guilt has been  
5 proven by evidence satisfying you of that guilt beyond a  
6 reasonable doubt. Presumption of innocence is not a mere  
7 legal theory. It's not just a legal phrase. It is a  
8 substantial, constitutional right to which every defendant  
9 is entitled unless you the jury are satisfied from the  
10 evidence of the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable  
11 doubt.

12           Our courts have defined a reasonable doubt as a  
13 kind of doubt that would cause a reasonable person to  
14 hesitate to act. A reasonable doubt is the kind of doubt  
15 that would cause a reasonable person to hesitate to act.  
16 Proof beyond a reasonable doubt is proof that leaves you  
17 firmly convinced of the defendant's guilt. There are very  
18 few things in this world that we know with absolute  
19 certainty.

20           In criminal cases, the law does not require proof  
21 that overcomes every possible doubt. If based on your  
22 consideration of the evidence you are firmly convinced that  
23 the defendant is guilty of the crime charged, then you must  
24 find him guilty. If, on the other hand, you think there's  
25 a real possibility that he is not guilty, you must give the

1 defendant the benefit of the doubt and find him not guilty.

2           As I've told you a couple of times during the trial  
3 of this case, you and I have had separate and distinct  
4 duties to perform. My job is to instruct you on the law  
5 and to rule on the admissibility of evidence. Your job is  
6 much more important. You have to decide the believability  
7 or the credibility of the witnesses who have testified in  
8 the case. So if at any time during the trial of this case  
9 I have smiled, frowned, raised my eyebrows, yawned,  
10 stretched, whatever, and you think I have an opinion about  
11 the facts, set that aside. I hear cases day in and day out  
12 from Cherokee County to Charleston, so I can have no  
13 opinion about the facts. That is your job. You are to  
14 determine what the facts are in this case.

15           As I told you when we started, this case is like  
16 most cases that I try, not unlike most cases. It is simply  
17 where you've got two versions of the facts. And it is your  
18 job to determine the credibility or the believability of  
19 the witnesses who have testify in the case. Credibility  
20 simply means believability. It becomes your duty as jurors  
21 to analyze and evaluate the evidence and determine which  
22 evidence convinces you of its truth.

23           In carrying out the task of determining credibility  
24 or believability of the witnesses, you may believe one  
25 witness over several, several over one. You can disbelieve

1 everything somebody says, you can believe everything  
2 somebody says. You can believe part of it or disbelieve  
3 part of it. So use your common sense that you deal with  
4 people on a day-to-day basis. That's how you determine  
5 whose telling the truth in this case.

6 You may consider whether any witness has exhibited  
7 to you any interest, bias, prejudice, or other motive in  
8 their testimony and you may even consider the appearance  
9 and the manner of a witness while on the witness stand.

10 Now, Mr. Foreman and ladies and gentlemen, that's  
11 sort of the general law that I charge in all the criminal  
12 cases. Let's turn to this particular case. In this case,  
13 the defendant is indicted and charged with what we call  
14 first-degree burglary. The State must first prove beyond a  
15 reasonable doubt that the defendant entered a dwelling  
16 without consent. A dwelling is defined as any building or  
17 portion of building in which a person ordinarily sleeps.  
18 They must first prove beyond a reasonable doubt that he  
19 entered a dwelling without consent. A dwelling is defined  
20 as a building in which a person ordinarily sleeps. In  
21 order to prove that the defendant entered the dwelling, the  
22 State does not have to show that the defendant's entire  
23 body entered the dwelling. The smallest entry is  
24 sufficient.

25 Next, the State must prove beyond a reasonable

1 doubt that the defendant intended to commit a crime at the  
2 time of the entry. The mere entry into a dwelling without  
3 consent is not burglary. If the intent to commit a crime  
4 is formed after the entry, it is not burglary. On the  
5 other hand, if the defendant intended to commit a crime at  
6 the time of the entry, it is burglary even if the intent  
7 was abandoned after the entry. It does not matter that the  
8 intended crime was not completed.

9           And finally, the State must prove beyond a  
10 reasonable doubt that the defendant has a prior record of  
11 two or more convictions for burglary. Evidence of prior  
12 offenses committed by the defendant -- this is not evidence  
13 offered to prove the defendant has a bad character or to  
14 prove that the defendant committed the burglary on this  
15 occasion. The prior convictions may be considered by you  
16 only for the purpose of determining whether or not it  
17 satisfies that element of the offense that makes it  
18 first-degree burglary, if you enter a dwelling without  
19 consent to commit a crime and you have two prior  
20 convictions for burglary.

21           Now, there are certain propositions of law. One we  
22 normally call it the hand of one is the hand of all. If a  
23 crime is committed by two or more people who are acting  
24 together in committing a crime, the act of one is the act  
25 of all. A person who joins with another to accomplish an

1 illegal purpose is criminally responsible for everything  
2 done by the other person which occurred as a natural  
3 consequence of the acts done in carrying out the common  
4 plan and purpose. If two or more people are together,  
5 acting together, assisting each other in committing the  
6 offense, the act of one is the act of all, or as it is  
7 sometimes said, the hand of one is the hand of all. Prior  
8 knowledge that the crime is going to be committed without  
9 more is not sufficient to make a person guilty of that  
10 crime. Mere knowledge that a person is going to commit a  
11 crime, even if the defendant is present when the crime is  
12 committed is not sufficient to convict the defendant as a  
13 principal. Therefore, a finding of a prior arranged plan  
14 or common scheme is necessary for finding guilt of a  
15 person -- the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt  
16 and with competent evidence that the theory of hand of one  
17 is the hand of all.

18 A principal in an a crime is one who actually  
19 commits the crime or who is present, aiding, abetting or  
20 assisting in committing the crime. When a person does an  
21 act in the presence of and with the assistance of another,  
22 the act is done by both. But I must caution you that mere  
23 presence at the scene is not sufficient to prove someone  
24 guilty of the crime. A defendant's presence where a crime  
25 is being committed or mere association with the person who

1 commits the crime does not make a defendant an accomplice  
2 or an aider or abetter or the hand of one is the hand of  
3 all in of the committing person committing the crime.

4         The burden is on the State of South Carolina to  
5 prove every element of the crime charged. If you find  
6 after reviewing all of the evidence that the State has  
7 proven or proved that the defendant was only at the scene  
8 and that they have not proved beyond a reasonable doubt any  
9 other participation of the crime, then you must find the  
10 defendant not guilty. The law is that proof of at the  
11 scene of the crime is not sufficient to find someone  
12 guilty.

13         Now, ladies and gentlemen, you'll have a verdict  
14 form in the jury room. Your verdict simply is we find the  
15 defendant not guilty; we find the defendant guilty.

16         Mr. Foreman it's a simple verdict form. You check  
17 not guilty or guilty. Your decision must be unanimous.  
18 All twelve of you must unanimously agree on what the  
19 verdict is.

20         You're to base your verdict solely on what you  
21 heard in the courtroom and determine what the true facts  
22 are from the witnesses. Judge their credibility, their  
23 believability. Thus you find the true facts, you apply it  
24 to the law as I've given it to you and you'll be in a  
25 position to render a true and just verdict; whether he's

1 guilty or not guilty.

2 Your decision -- you're not here to punish anyone,  
3 any enemy or reward any friends or anything. It's to be  
4 based solely on what you heard and on the law as I've given  
5 it to you. If at any time during the deliberations you  
6 have a question about something, write it out on a piece of  
7 paper in there --

8 **THE BAILIFF:** I'll get it for them.

9 **THE COURT:** Knock on the door and Miss Barbara will  
10 bring it to me. Sometimes I can answer it, sometimes I  
11 can't, depending on what your question is. I'll give you a  
12 response one way or the other.

13 I want you to return to your jury room now. I'm  
14 going to ask you not to start deliberating until I've asked  
15 the lawyers if I've left anything out and then I have to  
16 gather up all the exhibits and send it -- them -- the  
17 exhibits back to you along with the verdict form. Then you  
18 may start your deliberations.

19 Ms. Barbara, please separate the alternates.

20 **THE BAILIFF:** I will.

21 Everybody remain seated for a minute.

22 (WHEREUPON the jury left the courtroom at 3:02  
23 p.m.)

24 **THE COURT:** Any objections, requests, additions, or  
25 deletions by the State?

1           **MR. MILLER:** None from the State.

2           **THE COURT:** By the defendant?

3           **MR. THOMPSON:** Nothing from the defendant.

4           **THE COURT:** Gentlemen, please look at the exhibits  
5 and make sure we're all in agreement. Check the verdict  
6 form and give me your consent.

7           (WHEREUPON the exhibits were looked at by both the  
8 State and the defense.)

9           **THE COURT:** All right. Both the State and defense  
10 have reviewed the exhibits and are in agreement that  
11 they're there and have reviewed the verdict form and are in  
12 agreement and have agreed that that is proper.

13           All right. We'll stand at ease. It's five after  
14 three.

15           Ms. Barbara, you can tell them they may start their  
16 deliberations. We're going to take about a five minute  
17 break for y'all to get --

18           **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, do we want to pull the  
19 alternate's out.

20           **THE COURT:** Thank you.

21           (WHEREUPON deliberations by the jury began at 3:05  
22 p.m.)

23           (WHEREUPON it was reported to the Court that the  
24 jury had reached a verdict at 3:18 p.m.)

25           ///

VERDICT

1  
2           **THE COURT:** Mr. Miller, is the State ready to  
3 receive the verdict?

4           **MR. MILLER:** We are, Your Honor.

5           **THE COURT:** Mr. Thompson?

6           **MR. THOMPSON:** Yes, Your Honor.

7           (WHEREUPON the jury entered the courtroom at 3:21  
8 p.m.)

9           **THE COURT:** Mr. Foreman, have y'all reached a  
10 verdict.

11          **THE FOREMAN:** We have.

12          **THE COURT:** If you would pass it to the clerk,  
13 please.

14          Thank you, ma'am.

15          **THE CLERK:** Your Honor, we have State of South  
16 Carolina, Case No. 2012-GS-02-01518, State of South  
17 Carolina versus William R. Pearson, as of the offense of  
18 burglary in the first-degree, we the jury find the  
19 defendant guilty. Signed unanimously by Santos Pagan.

20          Members of the jury, Mr. Foreman, is this your  
21 verdict? Please respond by raising your right hand.

22          All hands are raised.

23          **THE COURT:** Thank you. Anything for the jury  
24 before I dismiss them?

25          **MR. MILLER:** Nothing from the State, Your Honor.

1           **MR. THOMPSON:** Nothing from the defense, Your  
2 Honor.

3           **THE COURT:** Thank y'all very much. I appreciate  
4 your effort and your service. I hope you enjoyed your  
5 lunch. You will not be required to come back anymore this  
6 week. I thank you and the citizens thank you. We cannot  
7 conduct court without y'all being ready and willing and  
8 able to go. Thank you very much. Ms. Barbara will show  
9 you back to your jury room. You'll give her your badge.  
10 If anyone needs a work excuse, Ms. Barbara will handle that  
11 for you. Thank you once again.

12           (WHEREUPON the jury left the courtroom at 3:33 p.m.

13           **THE COURT:** Mr. Probation agent, you need to do  
14 anything in regards to the guilty plea?

15           **OFFICER FINCH:** I need to serve a citation.

16           **THE COURT:** Go ahead and take care of that  
17 administrative matter.

18           (WHEREUPON the probation violation citation was  
19 served on the defendant.)

20           **OFFICER FINCH:** Thank you, Your Honor.

21           **THE COURT:** Mr. Thompson, any motions or anything  
22 you need to make?

23           **MR. THOMPSON:** Two, Your Honor. First of all I'd  
24 like to renew my motion for directed verdict, Your Honor.  
25 So much as taking the light most favorable to the State,

1 the State should not have been able to prove that the  
2 defendant was guilty in this matter. No reasonable jury  
3 should have found in favor of the State and I would like to  
4 ask the Court at this point in time to renew our motion for  
5 directed verdict.

6 **THE COURT:** Well, Mr. Thompson, as I said when I  
7 denied your motion, it boiled down to an issue of  
8 credibility and that's the province of the jury and they  
9 made that decision adverse to your client, so I  
10 respectfully deny your motion. Thank you.

11 Anything educational?

12 **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, also, since at this  
13 point in time it's moot, would like to ask that the Court  
14 consider vacating the bench warrant against David Rogier.

15 **THE COURT:** I've already done so.

16 Mr. Miller, is the -- this is life, but I can  
17 sentence him to no less than fifteen years. Can it be  
18 suspended any?

19 **MR. MILLER:** No, sir, Your Honor.

20 **THE COURT:** Mr. Thompson, can it be suspended?

21 Mr. Thompson, I asked you a question.

22 **MR. THOMPSON:** I do not believe it can be  
23 suspended. I also at this point in time would like to move  
24 for a new trial. Also renew any earlier objections. I  
25 don't remember that I made any on the record.

1           **THE COURT:** You didn't. What would the new trial  
2 be for?

3           **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, I'd like to ask the  
4 Court's indulgence to be able to prepare a brief on that  
5 and be able to submit that to you.

6           **THE COURT:** By when?

7           **MR. THOMPSON:** I can have it to you by close of  
8 business tomorrow.

9           **THE COURT:** I'll give you ten days.

10          **MR. THOMPSON:** Very fine, Your Honor.

11          **THE COURT:** And we'll just delay -- I can go ahead  
12 and sentence and if I offer you a new trial, I can vacate  
13 the sentence.

14          **MR. MILLER:** Yes, Your Honor, and there's a case  
15 that's relatively recent that is from Aiken County. Judge  
16 Cooper, I believe that with Court of Appeals. It affirmed  
17 that burglary in first-degree cannot be suspended.

18          **THE COURT:** Do you know the name of that case?

19          **MR. MILLER:** Judge, there were three defendants.  
20 They're all -- I can get it to you.

21          **THE COURT:** We're getting it right now. If you  
22 don't want to draw against Adam on the computer. He'll  
23 outdraw you.

24                 All right. Mr. Thompson, y'all come on up and let  
25 me do this.

SENTENCE

1  
2           **THE COURT:** All right. Mr. Finch, if you would  
3 please refresh my memory on Mr. Pearson's current probation  
4 status.

5           **OFFICER FINCH:** Yes, sir, Your Honor. Currently on  
6 probation on Indictment 09-GS-02-976, it's a burglary,  
7 violent, second degree.

8           **THE COURT:** Hold on a second. 0902976?

9           **OFFICER FINCH:** Yes, sir.

10          **THE COURT:** Burg second?

11          **OFFICER FINCH:** Yes, sir, violent.

12          **THE COURT:** And the sentence was?

13          **OFFICER FINCH:** Twelve years suspended upon four  
14 years of service and four years of probation.

15          **THE COURT:** When was that handed down, please?

16          **OFFICER FINCH:** July 23rd, 2009.

17          **THE COURT:** Is that correct, Mr. Thompson? You  
18 agree with that.

19          **MR. THOMPSON:** Your Honor, beg the Court's  
20 indulgence.

21          **THE COURT:** So that's eight years on that?

22          **OFFICER FINCH:** Yes, sir, Your Honor.

23          **MR. THOMPSON:** I believe he's looking at eight  
24 years, Your Honor. I don't remember exactly what year he  
25 was sentenced --

1           **THE COURT:** Well, if it was twelve, four and four,  
2 it's twelve less four then.

3           **MR. THOMPSON:** I do agree that he was sentenced to  
4 twelve and that he did four active and eight suspended and  
5 that he did all of his time on the four active, so he does  
6 have eight.

7           **THE COURT:** Mr. Thompson, would you please sign the  
8 sentence sheet. Ask your client to. He doesn't have to,  
9 but ask him to.

10           (WHEREUPON the sentence sheet was being signed.)

11           **THE COURT:** All right. The case that you're  
12 referring to is State versus Jerrick, J-e-r-r-i-c-k. I  
13 guess that's how you say it. Jerrick, Manuel Thomas, Judge  
14 Cothran. It's an unpublished opinion, but it says Court  
15 abused its discretion when it failed to consider whether it  
16 had the option to suspend the sentence for first-degree  
17 burglary. It was dismissed under Anders.

18           **MR. MILLER:** There's another opinion, Your Honor.  
19 I'll get it.

20           **THE COURT:** That's all right.

21           **MR. MILLER:** South Carolina Supreme Court, State  
22 versus Jacobs, was not an Aiken case, but the Supreme Court  
23 said that it's not.

24           **THE COURT:** That's why we couldn't find it.

25           **MR. MILLER:** Yes, sir. I only knew it because it

1 was my case. Jacobs wasn't.

2           **THE COURT:** All right. You've taken care of  
3 everything you need to do on the probation violation?

4           **OFFICER FINCH:** Yes, sir, I served him the Court  
5 citation.

6           **THE COURT:** Mr. Miller, anything else you need to  
7 add?

8           **MR. MILLER:** No, Your Honor. I would point out  
9 that until 2004 was the first -- 2002 was the first  
10 conviction other than fraudulent checks that the defendant  
11 had of any kind. It was a simple assault and battery. By  
12 May of 2004, he was convicted of criminal domestic violence  
13 and petit larceny and burglary second. That was his --  
14 excuse me, September of 2005 was his burglary second --  
15 first burg conviction.

16           He had a position of drug paraphernalia in '08 his  
17 second burglary conviction was in '09. And that's the only  
18 record that he has, Your Honor.

19           **THE COURT:** All right. So we're all on the same  
20 page, the case you just gave me the site on, State versus  
21 Abel, A-b-e-l, Jacobs, opinion 27015 filed July 2011. That  
22 was Judge Child's case out of probably Richland County.  
23 Richland County wherein Chief Justice Toal wrote an opinion  
24 affirmed by all the active justices wherein it was Court  
25 addressed whether or not the Courts had authority to

1 suspend sentences for crimes punishable by death or life  
2 imprisonment, including burglary first and we find that a  
3 conviction of first-degree may not be suspended. That  
4 answers that question.

5 Mr. Miller, anything else?

6 MR. MILLER: Nothing from the State, Your Honor.

7 The victim did not wish to address the Court.

8 THE COURT: Thank you. Mr. Thompson?

9 MR. THOMPSON: Your Honor, may it please the Court,  
10 Mr. Pearson is 56 years old. He went to the 7th grade to  
11 Graniteville Trade School, right.

12 THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

13 MR. THOMPSON: He has six grown children and some  
14 grandchildren.

15 THE DEFENDANT: I got eight grandchildren. I got  
16 two on the way.

17 MR. THOMPSON: He tells me that he's disabled. He  
18 has --

19 THE DEFENDANT: I just got my disability approved.

20 MR. THOMPSON: He's going to let you talk.

21 THE DEFENDANT: I'm sorry.

22 MR. THOMPSON: That's all right.

23 THE COURT: That's fine.

24 MR. THOMPSON: He's disabled due to problems with  
25 his back and his nerves.

1           **THE DEFENDANT:** I've got mental disability.

2           **MR. THOMPSON:** He is supposed to be taking  
3 Clonapam.

4           **THE DEFENDANT:** Yeah.

5           **MR. THOMPSON:** He -- Your Honor, you've heard the  
6 facts of this case ad nauseam. I would just submit to the  
7 Court that to take into account in your sentencing that  
8 it's my understanding that this was something that  
9 evidently was not even planned or --

10          **THE COURT:** I understand.

11          **MR. THOMPSON:** Well thought out, that this was --  
12 that, Your Honor, there were no guns or any type of weapons  
13 taken from the scene or used at the scene. Your Honor, I'd  
14 like to ask that the Court consider a minimum sentence in  
15 this matter and consider running the probation violation  
16 concurrent with his sentence. It's our understanding that  
17 he's not really in very good health and being 56 years old,  
18 he -- even at the minimum, he will serve a significant  
19 amount of time, the significant amount of the rest of his  
20 life in prison and we'd like to ask the Court to entertain  
21 the minimum.

22          **THE COURT:** Sure. Mr. Pearson, what do you want to  
23 tell me?

24          **THE DEFENDANT:** Your Honor, there wasn't nothing  
25 intentional done there. Your Honor, my hand, Lord I didn't

1 mean it, didn't have nothing to do with that. I didn't.

2 THE COURT: I believe you.

3 THE DEFENDANT: I just -- I got multiple problems.  
4 I don't know what happened, honest. I didn't. I didn't go  
5 in that house. And please be...

6 THE COURT: Well, you know, my hands are tied to  
7 some extent.

8 THE DEFENDANT: Please have mercy on me.

9 THE COURT: I will. I will give you all the mercy  
10 I can give you.

11 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir.

12 THE COURT: But, you know, the law says the minimum  
13 sentence is fifteen years.

14 THE DEFENDANT: Oh my God. My mama's about to die,  
15 Your Honor.

16 THE COURT: I just tried to see in I could suspend  
17 it. The law will not allow me.

18 THE DEFENDANT: Oh, Jesus.

19 THE COURT: All right. Revoke his probation in  
20 full. Terminate it and convert any monetary obligations to  
21 a civil judgment. It will run current with 12-GS-02-1558  
22 and the sentence of the Court, Mr. Pearson, is you be  
23 committed to the State Department of Corrections for a  
24 minimum sentence of 15 years. Good luck.

25 MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Your Honor.

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**THE COURT:** 85 percent.

**OFFICER FINCH:** Thank you, Your Honor.

**MR. THOMPSON:** I'll talk to you.

\* \* \* \* \* END OF TRANSCRIPT \* \* \* \* \*

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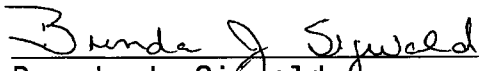
State of South Carolina )  
County of Aiken )      **Certificate of Reporter**

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, Brenda J. Sigwald, Official Court Reporter for the Fifth Judicial Circuit of the State of South Carolina, do hereby certify that I reported the proceedings in the captioned case in the Court of General Sessions in and for the State of South Carolina on the 15th through the 16th day of October, 2012.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that the foregoing pages, numbered 1 through 163 constitute a true, accurate and complete transcript of said hearing.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither kin, counsel, nor of interest to any party hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal at Aiken County, this 8th day of June, 2013.

  
Brenda J. Sigwald,  
Court Reporter and Notary Public  
For the State of South Carolina  
My commission expires  
January 4, 2020.

WITNESSES

New Ellenton Police Department

Patrick Spires

Law Enforcement Case #: 12-000972-05

DWM

ARREST WARRANT NUMBER

M035742

Oct 4 2012

*Liz Godard*

C.C.R.A.G.S.

*Shawn Langley*  
Deputy Clerk

ACTION OF GRAND JURY

*Tom Bill*

*William Pearson*

Foreperson of Grand Jury  
Date: October 4, 2012

VERDICT

Foreperson of Petit Jury  
Date:

DOCKET NO. 2012GS0201518

The State of South Carolina

County of Aiken

COURT OF GENERAL SESSIONS

OCTOBER TERM 2012

THE STATE

vs.

WILLIAM R. PEARSON

CDR #: 0079

Indictment for

BURGLARY FIRST DEGREE

§ 16-11-0311

J. STROM THURMOND, SOLICITOR

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
 )  
COUNTY OF AIKEN )  
 )

INDICTMENT FOR  
BURGLARY FIRST DEGREE

§ 16-11-0311

At a Court of General Sessions, convened on October 8, 2012, the Grand Jurors of Aiken County present upon their oath:

That **WILLIAM R. PEARSON**, along with William J. Pearson, did in Aiken County on or about May 28, 2012, wilfully and unlawfully enter the dwelling of John Hines located at [REDACTED] Avenue, New Ellenton, South Carolina, without consent and with the intent to commit a crime therein and the defendant has two or more prior convictions for burglary, all in violation of §16-11-311, Code of Laws of South Carolina (1976), as amended.

Against the peace and dignity of the State, and contrary to the statute in such case made and provided.

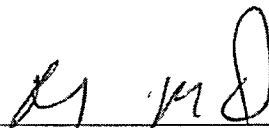


J. STROM THURMOND, SOLICITOR

## CERTIFICATE OF COUNSEL FOR APPELLANT

Counsel for appellant certifies that this Record on Appeal contains all material proposed to be included by any of the parties and not any other material and that this Record on Appeal complies to the best of my ability, with the August 13, 2007, order from the South Carolina Supreme Court entitled "Interim Guidance Regarding Personal Data Identifiers and Other Sensitive Information in Appellate Court Filings."

January 24, 2014



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Robert M. Dudek  
Chief Appellate Defender

South Carolina Commission on Indigent Defense  
Division of Appellate Defense  
PO Box 11589  
Columbia, S. C. 29211-1589  
(803) 734-1330

ATTORNEY FOR APPELLANT

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE COURT OF APPEALS

Appeal from Aiken County

Doyet A. Early, III, Circuit Court Judge

THE STATE,

RESPONDENT,

V.

WILLIAM R. PEARSON,

APPELLANT

APPELLATE CASE NO. 2013-000098

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that a true copy of the Record on Appeal in the above referenced case has been served upon Salley W. Elliott, Esquire, at Rembert Dennis Building, 1000 Assembly Street, Room 519, Columbia, SC 29201 this 24th day of January, 2014.

*Brandon Hall*

Brandon Hall  
Administrative Specialist

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me  
this 24th day of January, 2014 .

*Barley Need* (L.S.)  
Notary Public for South Carolina

My Commission Expires: October 24, 2021 .

**RECEIVED**

JAN 24 2014

**SC Court of Appeals**