

## Exercises from the Rehearsal Room #6: *A Question of Conscience*

4 March - 2 May 2015 UK Tour



*Jonathan Guy Lewis as Eddie Carbone (Photo: Manuel Harlan)*

In *A View from the Bridge* ironically it is the lawyer Alfieri who attempts to dissuade Eddie from carrying out an action which is, in essence, the legal thing to do; to make a phone call to the Immigration Bureau about the two illegal immigrants Rodolpho and Marco. However this particular Red Hook society is comprised of a complex mix of social, legal, familial and moral order that defines how people interact with each other.

**Eddie** *You mean to tell me that there's no law that a guy which he ain't right can go to work and marry a girl and – ?*

**Alfieri** *You have no recourse in the law, Eddie.*

**Eddie** *Yeah, but if he ain't right, Mr Alfieri, you mean to tell me –*

**Alfieri** *There is nothing you can do, Eddie, believe me.*

**Eddie** *Nothin'.*

**Alfieri** *Nothing at all. There's only one legal question here.*

**Eddie** *What?*

**Alfieri** *The manner in which they entered the country. But I don't think you want to do anything about that, do you?*

## Exercises from the Rehearsal Room #6: (continued)

A useful technique for exploring any kind of dilemma faced by a character, providing an opportunity to analyse a decisive moment in greater detail is a conscience exercise

- ➡ Maybe following on from Exercises in the Rehearsal Room #1 and some appropriate warm-up exercises and study of the text
- ➡ As a group, create two lists:
  - One which has all the reasons why Eddie should phone the Immigration Bureau
  - The other which lists all the reasons why he shouldn't
- ➡ Divide the group into threes; one person (A) will be the character of Eddie and the other two will be the voice of his conscience – one (B) who is pro phoning the bureau and the other (C) who is against
- ➡ Position a telephone (or something that represents a phone) at one end of the room and ask the group to position themselves in their threes around the room
- ➡ Explain that if Eddie reaches the phone he has made the decision to make the call
- ➡ B and C must then make their arguments - as they do A should take a step towards or a step away from the act of making the phone call according to what they hear
- ➡ Ask the players to freeze, and note the pattern that they are making in the room
- ➡ From those closest to the phone - what are the strongest arguments for?
- ➡ From those further away - what are the strongest arguments against making the call?
- ➡ Maybe swap over roles so that each gets a chance to consider the argument from a different perspective
- ➡ Depending on what stage of study you're at with the play, during the exercise, you could encourage A as Eddie to consider the consequences of making or not making the call – what might happen as a result of the call? To him? To others? What might happen if he doesn't make the call?
- ➡ You could use this physicalisation to help with staging certain scenes from the play and/or progress this understanding into a piece of persuasive writing