**TV Heist Defendant Testimony**

Q. Good morning sir, could you please state your name for the record?

A. Good morning, my name is José Alfonso Quinteros.

Q. Very well, I’m going to ask you to think back to November 12, 2011. Do you remember that date?

A. Yes, of course I remember. You know, there are things we are never able to forget.

Q. Let me back up a bit. Have we met before?

A. Yes ma’am, you and I have had several conversations.

Q. As a result of those conversations, did you plead guilty to distribution of stolen property?

A. Well, uh, I plead guilty because my lawyer advised me to tell the truth. So, yes ma’am.

Q. What, if anything did you get in return for pleading guilty?

A. Nothing, for now. If I tell the truth here, you are supposed to notify the judge so I may be considered at the moment of sentencing.

Q. Before being arrested in this case, was most of your income derived from illegal activities?

A. I’m embarrassed to admit it, but honestly I was in a rough spot and that led me to commit some crimes. I just want the judge to know that I never hurt anyone.

Q. Very well. What did you do for a living before beginning a life of crime?

A. I have been working since I was very young. Before my father passed away, he used to take me to his shop, and that’s where I learned to be a mechanic. Before all my problems I was employed at Briggs Auto Service, as a truck mechanic.

Q. Please tell us who the owner of that shop was, if you know.

A. The owner was some gringo named Steven Briggs, but he was never around. As a matter of fact, I started working there and never knew who the owner was.

Q. Sir, did you ever have the opportunity to meet Mr. Briggs?

A. I’m not quite sure of the exact date, but I know I first spoke with him sometime late October 2011.

Q. How did you come to meet Mr. Briggs? Did someone introduce you to him?

A. No, I was never introduced. He just showed up one day out of the blue to tell us he was closing down the shop because it was not making enough revenue. That same day he offered us a job so we could make a little extra dough.

Q. Let me interrupt you there for one second… when you say “we”, who are you referring to?

A. Well, I’m talking about me and some of my friends… one of them was named Francisco but we all called him Pancho Pantera, and a buddy of mine from my country called Ismael.

Q. Go on, what did Mr. Briggs say to you, what kind of deal did he offer?

A. Uh, well supposedly we were going to receive a cargo shipment from God knows where and he wanted us to unload it. I had a bad feeling about it, because we had to do it in the middle of the night and present some fake IDs that he gave us.

Q. Did he tell you that what you would be doing was illegal?

A. Of course not, but I’m no dummy. There was obviously something rotten about the whole situation. I should have known better.

Q. Go on; please explain to the Court what you needed to do on that occasion.

A. We had to go to the West Baltimore shipyard, it was important that we should arrive to dock 17before midnight and look for a container on a cargo ship. Since I’m a mechanic, I was asked to bring some tools: a ratchet, a hacksaw and a blowtorch.

Q. So you and your friends agreed to help Mr. Briggs unload said container, is this correct? On the day in question what did you and your accomplices actually do?

A. Me and my boys were in a van we used to pick up spare parts. I was nervous because of the papers we had to present to the guard because I knew they weren’t legit. But the guy let us in so we went to find the container.

Q. So please tell us again the date that these events took place in and, if you remember, the exact time you spoke with the security guard?

A. The Baltimore thing happened November 12, 2011, and when we arrived it was exactly 12:10 am.

Q. Well, Mr. Quinteros, it’s been a while since that happened. How come you remember so many details?

A. As I said, there are things you just never forget. We were supposed to get in out in less than an hour… before the shift change… but it took us too long and we were late. The boss had given me a crude sketch of the area and when I looked at it I noticed the time on his watch.

Q. I’m showing you what has been previously marked as Exhibit 22 for the prosecution, is this the map you are referring to?

A. Yes. We were looking for the registration number on the side of the ship’s hull. Let's see... um, F081956. When we found it, I got up to the door and I got on the ladder that we had brought. Afterwards, in order to remove one of the panels above us I torched the bolts while Ismael loosened them and Pancho Pantera removed them.

Q. I see, so after you started working on the container’s door, did all the bolts come off quickly or did you have any difficulties?

A. No, it sure wasn’t easy. In fact one of the bolts wouldn’t budge and broke off, luckily I had a spare. We were trying to leave everything the same way we found it.

Q. Once you took the panel off, what did you do then?

A. Well, we immediately started unloading the container. We got out about 20, 25 42 inch flat screen televisions. That took us about an hour. After we were done we replaced the panels, got in the truck and immediately left for Briggs’ workshop.

Q. I see, can you please tell us how long the whole operation took?

A. From the time we arrived to the time we left it was about an hour and 57 minutes. Of course, I’m not counting the time it took us to get to Baltimore and back. I’m just referring to the time inside the dock.

Q. Sounds to me like you ran a very well organized operation, right?

A. Well Miss… we were hired because of the fact that we are professionals.

Q. So you went back to the shop after you had loaded your truck. By the way, where exactly was Steven Briggs’ shop located?

A. At the time, the shop was on Elton Street, very close to where I used to live. I’m not sure if Mr. Briggs would still own a shop there… know what I mean?

Q. On that occasion sir, did you get paid for the job that you and your buddies so professionally executed?

A. Uh, no one ever gave me money, I was just given 4 of the fucking T.V’s that we unloaded from the container. That’s why I was so pissed off with the boss. I thought we were getting some cash, not some stupid TVs. What an asshole!

Q. Mr. Quinteros, please keep your cool. I’m sure the judge doesn’t appreciate you using foul language in the courtroom. What did you do with the television sets?

A. Oops! I’m sorry, but the truth is that every time I think about what he did to me and my boys… Now, with the whole T.V thing… I kept one of them, and sold another one. The other two were in my mom’s garage.

Q. How did you manage to sell that one television set? I mean you didn’t have any paperwork or receipts for it, right?

A. You see, that’s where I screwed up. I called one of those radio shows, on 680 LPAM station. They offer free advertising for when you want to sell something, so I placed an ad. After a few hours I got a call from some Guatemalan

Q. How much did you charge that individual for the stolen TV?

A. I asked for $750.00, but we haggled for a bit and finally settled for $500.00 cash. He paid me right then and there with five Benjamins

Q. Not a bad take for less than two hours of work, huh?

A. That’s what I thought, but now it looks like I’m going to spend at least seven years of my life in the slammer.

Q. Good point… Your Honor… could I have a few minutes to check my notes…? I think I’m almost done.