

1 Please raise your right hand.

2 (Witness sworn.)

3 THE COURT: Have a seat, please.

4 You may proceed.

5 MS. MAGNESS: Thank you.

6 **WARREN LOUIS MEELER,**

7 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

8 **DIRECT EXAMINATION**

9 **BY MS. MAGNESS:**

10 Q. Good afternoon.

11 A. Good afternoon.

12 Q. Introduce yourself to the jury, please.

13 A. I'm Sergeant W. L. Meeler. My first
14 name is Warren, middle name is Louis.

15 Q. And who do you work for?

16 A. The Houston Police Department.

17 Q. How long have you been employed with the
18 Houston Police Department?

19 A. Fifteen years.

20 Q. What division are you currently assigned
21 to?

22 A. I'm currently assigned to the Homicide
23 Division.

24 Q. And how long have you worked within the
25 Homicide Division?

1 A. Four years and two months.

2 Q. The -- your normal shift, what's your
3 normal shift?

4 A. My normal shift is from 7:00 a.m. until
5 3:00 p.m.

6 Q. And back in November of 2011, were you
7 working that same shift?

8 A. Yes, I was.

9 Q. Were you part of -- I guess it's Squad
10 5?

11 A. Squadron No. 1.

12 Q. Squadron No. 1. And who do you work
13 with routinely?

14 A. I work with a squad of nine other
15 investigators. We're each assigned with our own
16 partner. And within that squad we have different
17 rotation cycles that we're on.

18 Q. And who was your partner back in
19 November of 2010?

20 A. Officer Jonathan French.

21 Q. Officer French has already testified,
22 and so what I want to do is sort of pick up from his
23 testimony, ask you the role that you played in this
24 investigation in putting this case together.

25 Do you have a copy of your offense

1 report in case you need it for reference?

2 A. Yes, I do.

3 Q. Okay. All right. Let's start, first of
4 all, how were you notified that there was a
5 suspected homicide and that the case would be
6 assigned to you?

7 A. That night I was on a rotational
8 call-out duty for weeknight call-out, which means I
9 was responsible for scenes that came in during the
10 nighttime. I was at home at my personal residence
11 when I received a phone call from Homicide Intake
12 Hold Desk.

13 Q. And were you given a location as to
14 where the homicide occurred?

15 A. Yes, I was.

16 Q. And what location were you given?

17 A. 11000 Martin Luther King Boulevard, or
18 actually Canterway.

19 Q. I think initially the call dropped as a
20 major accident, right?

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. Okay. And it wasn't until further
23 investigation that it was revealed that it was
24 actually a homicide?

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. Okay. So -- so the call drops as an
2 accident; but when you were contacted, the call had
3 changed to homicide?

4 A. Correct. At 5435 Canterway.

5 Q. Okay. So once you got the call, what
6 did you do?

7 A. I prepared myself for the investigation,
8 got ready and then drove to the scene -- or actually
9 I drove to the hospital at that point because I knew
10 the victim had been transported to the hospital.

11 Q. Okay. And was that a decision you made
12 on your own or did you talk with your partner and
13 decide that one of y'all would be at the scene and
14 one of you would be going the hospital?

15 A. Once we received the details from the --
16 once I received the details from the Intake Desk, I
17 contacted my partner. We discussed the information
18 that we had. We learned that he was at the
19 hospital, so it was decided between the both of us
20 that he would respond to the scene and I would go to
21 the hospital and begin the hospital investigation.

22 Q. When you arrived at Ben Taub Hospital,
23 did you speak with an attending physician there that
24 had worked on Mr. Little?

25 A. Initially I met with the officer that

1 was guarding the body in a secured location inside
2 of the hospital locker room. I wasn't able to speak
3 with the attending physician, but I spoke with a
4 registered nurse there who provided me with the name
5 of the physician that gave the death pronouncement.

6 Q. Okay. And at what time was Mr. Little
7 pronounced deceased?

8 A. At 11:52 p.m. on November the 3rd -- or
9 it would have been Wednesday, November the 2nd,
10 2011.

11 Q. After leaving the hospital where did you
12 go?

13 A. I responded to 5435 Canterway.

14 Q. And what time did you arrive there?

15 A. At 2:25 a.m.

16 Q. When you arrived on the scene, were
17 there any employees of Domino's Pizza on the scene?

18 A. Yes, there were.

19 Q. And specifically did you interact with
20 any employee of Domino's?

21 A. Yes, the -- the owner of Domino's Pizza,
22 Mr. -- I have to review these names. There was
23 several of them.

24 Q. You can call him the owner because his
25 name is really tough to pronounce.

1 A. The owner, the manager.

2 Q. And the manager being a female?

3 A. Yes, Claudia Williams.

4 Q. Yes. And she's already testified today?

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. Based on conversing with them, was it
7 decided that some form of follow-up investigation
8 would be conducted at the Domino's storefront where
9 the victim was employed?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. And we've already had testimony from
12 Officer Lujan, so we know that he went forward and
13 obtained information from Domino's.

14 While you were there at the Canterway
15 location, did you personally interview any residents
16 or neighbors in that neighborhood?

17 A. Yes, I did.

18 Q. And who did you interview?

19 A. I interviewed Ella Blount, her daughter,
20 and her name escapes me. I apologize.

21 Q. It's all right. Tiffany Covington?

22 A. Ella Blount, yes, Tiffany Covington was
23 her daughter and Ms. Gladys Jackson.

24 Q. Okay. Now, Ella Blount, was she or is
25 she the homeowner there of the house on Canterway,

1 the one where the vehicle drove through the fence?

2 A. Yes, she is.

3 Q. Okay. Did you gather anything of
4 investigative importance through your interview of
5 Ms. Blount or her daughter?

6 A. Just that they heard the crash.

7 Q. But neither of them had seen anything?

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. You interviewed Gladys Jackson, correct?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. And Ms. Jackson testified yesterday
12 already as to her observations.

13 About a little after 4:00 o'clock that
14 morning, did you get a call from Officer Lujan?

15 A. Yes, I did.

16 Q. And did he provide you with the phone
17 number for the pizza order that was placed for the
18 Madden Street location?

19 A. Yes, he did.

20 Q. And was that phone number 832-696-6280?

21 A. Yes, it was.

22 Q. Now, this is -- is your first solid
23 investigative lead, correct?

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. And so what do you do with that phone

1 number?

2 A. We have several databases that we can
3 access. The one that I used in this case is a
4 database called Cop Link. Cop Link draws
5 information from offense reports. Say when an
6 officer comes to your house -- you report a crime.
7 An officer comes to your house. He gathers your
8 information. He gets your name, your phone number,
9 your address. It draws from that. And also if you
10 get a traffic citation, when the officer collects
11 your name, your date of birth, your address and your
12 phone number, it also goes into that database. And
13 by entering that phone number in there, it searches
14 all these offense reports and it searches all of
15 the -- some arrest records, specifically in Houston
16 and Harris County as well as traffic citations, and
17 then I did receive information from that database.

18 Q. After searching that database, what
19 names do you come up with?

20 A. I come up with Curtessa Levi and Tranard
21 Lovings.

22 Q. And do you follow up on that lead?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. Prior to doing that, did you
25 obtain any records from Claudia Williams, the

1 manager of the Domino's Pizza?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And what records did she provide to you?

4 A. She provided us with the call logs as
5 well as the detailed order sheet for that -- for
6 Wednesday, November the 2nd -- for the 2nd.

7 Q. And the jury already has the benefit of
8 that evidence. Those records have already been
9 introduced.

10 Did you follow up and attempt to
11 interview Curtessa Levi?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And where did that interview occur?

14 A. We initially met with her at Sterling,
15 Sterling High School.

16 Q. Uh-huh.

17 A. And we spoke with her for a little
18 while. We contacted her mother, and then we
19 transported her to the Homicide Division.

20 Q. And who interviewed Curtessa?

21 A. That would be Sergeant Cisneros.

22 Q. And was her -- was her mother present at
23 the time that she was interviewed?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. Now, based on the interview of

1 Curtessa, what's the next name that you get that
2 becomes a person of interest?

3 A. Jacobe White. We get Timothy Robinson,
4 and we get a nickname of Collarbone.

5 Q. Okay. And at what point do you get the
6 name Jalessa London?

7 A. During that interview as well.

8 Q. With Curtessa?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. So you got three proper names and
11 a nickname?

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. When Curtessa provides you with the name
14 of Jalessa London, does she do anything to assist
15 you in locating Jalessa London?

16 A. Yes, she takes us to an apartment
17 complex where she believed that she had been
18 staying.

19 Q. And where was that apartment complex
20 located?

21 A. I just need to verify.

22 Q. And you don't have to give me the exact
23 address.

24 A. It's 12000 Martin Luther King Boulevard,
25 Apartment No. 2196, I believe.

1 Q. So is it in chose proximity to -- to
2 where the shooting occurred in this case?

3 A. Yes, it is.

4 Q. Is it within walking distance?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And how long would it take you to walk
7 from those apartments to, say, the Madden Street
8 house?

9 A. I would say no more than ten minutes.

10 Q. Okay. When you -- so Curtessa points
11 out the apartment where she thinks Jalessa is
12 staying?

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. Did you make contact with Jalessa in
15 those early morning hours?

16 A. No, we did not.

17 Q. Let's move now to Friday. So we're on
18 November the 4th. Did you obtain an arrest warrant
19 for Jacobe White?

20 A. Yes, I did.

21 Q. And for what criminal offense was the --
22 or did the arrest warrant cite?

23 A. Capital murder.

24 Q. And ultimately did Jacobe White either
25 turn himself in or was he arrested?

1 A. Ultimately he turned himself in.

2 Q. In an -- in obtaining that arrest
3 warrant for Jacobe White, who had you interviewed
4 that provided information concerning his involvement
5 in this capital murder?

6 A. Who had I interviewed or who had --

7 Q. I'm sorry. Who had been interviewed?

8 A. Okay. Curtessa Levi, Tranard Lovings,
9 Margaret Thompson and Willie Williams.

10 Q. After Jacobe White turns himself in, is
11 he interviewed?

12 A. Yes, he is.

13 Q. And does he give a voluntary custodial
14 statement?

15 A. Yes, he does.

16 Q. And who was responsible for interviewing
17 Jacobe White?

18 A. I was.

19 Q. And during your interview of Jacobe
20 White, did he disclose to you his role in this
21 capital murder?

22 A. Yes, he did.

23 Q. And did he incriminate himself for the
24 criminal offense of capital murder?

25 A. Yes, he did.

1 Q. Was he ultimately charged with capital
2 murder?

3 A. Yes, he was.

4 Q. That same day on Friday, November the
5 4th, was Jalessa London interviewed?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And do you know who was responsible for
8 interviewing Ms. London?

9 A. Sergeant Cisneros.

10 Q. After obtaining information from
11 Ms. London -- and by the way, was her mother present
12 when she was interviewed?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And at that time was she a juvenile?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Did she provide a voluntary statement?

17 A. Initially, yes.

18 Q. And did she ultimately disclose her role
19 in this capital murder?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And was she charged in the Juvenile
22 Court System with capital murder?

23 A. Yes, she was.

24 Q. Were you present when Juvonia Hackett
25 came to the Homicide office?

1 A. Yes, I was.

2 Q. And who was it that interviewed
3 Ms. Hackett?

4 A. Sergeant Cisneros.

5 Q. Based on the information provided by
6 Ms. Hackett, is that where you first get the name
7 Darryl Reed?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And so were you able to make any link
10 between nickname Collarbone and actual name Darryl
11 Reed?

12 A. Yes, I was. Actually that morning I had
13 been -- I believe we received information from
14 Ms. Eleanor -- the name escapes me.

15 Q. Thompson?

16 A. Eleanor Thompson that Collarbone had
17 been arrested somewhere off of Selinsky. We still
18 didn't have a solid name on him, but we knew that he
19 had been in jail at that point and then he -- and
20 that he had been picked up with some weapons. And
21 once she was able to give us that information, I was
22 able to research and find the offense report where
23 it documented his arrest.

24 Q. Okay. So you get a tip Collarbone is
25 arrested, but that alone isn't enough to figure out

1 the true identity of Collarbone?

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. So when you -- when -- then his sister,
4 Juvonia Hackett, is interviewed and provides you the
5 name of Darryl Reed, you're then able to backtrack
6 and find the offense report pertaining to his
7 arrest?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. Do you know whether or not Darryl
10 Reed was interviewed?

11 A. Yes, he was.

12 Q. And can you explain to the jury how --
13 how it occurred or what happened that caused him to
14 be interviewed?

15 A. Once Juvonia Hackett arrived with
16 Officer Ellis who she had reached out to, she was
17 brought to the office to be interviewed. And
18 Sergeant Cisneros was conducting that interview when
19 Juvonia Hackett received a phone call from Darryl
20 Reed in the Harris County Jail. And he initiated a
21 conversation with Sergeant Cisneros and pretty much
22 welcomed us to come over and speak with him.

23 Q. Okay. So the Defendant is calling his
24 sister on her cell phone from the jail?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And then she hands the phone over and
2 Sergeant Cisneros talks to the Defendant?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Based on that conversation, do you and
5 Sergeant Cisneros go to the Harris County Jail?

6 A. Yes, we do.

7 Q. And does that occur the same day?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Were you present when Darryl Reed was
10 interviewed?

11 A. Yes, I was.

12 Q. And at the time that he was interviewed,
13 had he been charged with the offense of capital
14 murder?

15 A. No, he had not been.

16 Q. But he was in the custody of the Harris
17 County Sheriff's Department on an unrelated matter?

18 A. Yes, an unrelated matter.

19 Q. Okay. Did Mr. Reed provide information
20 as to his involvement in this capital murder?

21 MR. CORNELIUS: Just -- before you
22 answer that, Judge, we object. We reiterate our
23 objection that we've already heard outside the
24 presence of the jury; but not to waive it, I will
25 have to reiterate it.

1 THE COURT: Overruled.

2 MR. CORNELIUS: Thank you.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. (By Ms. Magness) And was the interview
5 conducted with the Defendant recorded?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Was it an audio recording, a video
8 recording with audio, or both?

9 A. It was an audio recording.

10 Q. And as I understand it, you can't take
11 video equipment into the County Jail?

12 A. I don't know if that's our policy or
13 not. We just didn't have access to it at the time.

14 Q. Okay. Did you sit through the entire
15 interview of the Defendant?

16 A. Yes, I did.

17 Q. At this point, we're not going to go
18 into what he said. I want to ask you some questions
19 just generally about his attitude, his demeanor,
20 things of that nature.

21 Based on your observations, did he
22 appear to be under the influence of drugs or
23 alcohol?

24 A. No, he did not.

25 Q. Did he have any difficulty communicating

1 or understanding questions that were posed to him?

2 A. No, he did not.

3 Q. Was there anything that occurred during
4 your interaction with him that would have led you to
5 believe that he was of below average intelligence?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Was he able to communicate effectively
8 and articulate his thoughts?

9 A. Yes, he was very -- able to communicate
10 very well.

11 Q. Was he polite with you?

12 A. He was very polite.

13 Q. Was he cooperative?

14 A. Very cooperative.

15 Q. And these questions are specific to you.
16 Did you in any way make any form of promise of
17 benefit or leniency to the Defendant in exchange for
18 his statement?

19 A. Absolutely not.

20 Q. Did you say anything to him that would
21 have been threatening, coercive, intimidating,
22 anything along those lines?

23 A. Absolutely not.

24 Q. At any time while you and Sergeant
25 Cisneros were talking to the Defendant, did he

1 represent to you that he didn't want to talk to you
2 anymore?

3 A. No, he did not.

4 Q. Did he ever at any time during that
5 interaction tell you that he wanted an attorney or
6 that he would talk to you but not until his attorney
7 showed up?

8 A. No, he did not.

9 Q. Did he at any time invoke his Fifth
10 Amendment privilege to remain silent?

11 A. No, he did not.

12 Q. Were you present when Sergeant Cisneros
13 read the Defendant his Miranda warning?

14 A. Yes, I was.

15 Q. And after Sergeant Cisneros read the
16 Miranda warnings to the Defendant, did the Defendant
17 vocalize that he understood his rights?

18 A. Yes, he did.

19 Q. Was he asked whether or not he would
20 agree to waive those rights and speak with you and
21 Sergeant Cisneros about this case?

22 A. Yes, he agreed to speak with us.

23 Q. And did he do that voluntarily?

24 A. Voluntarily.

25 Q. So information was obtained from

1 Mr. Reed?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Based on that information, did you seek
4 authorization to charge him with a criminal offense?

5 A. Yes, I did.

6 Q. And what offense was he charged with?

7 A. Capital murder.

8 Q. At this point -- let me rephrase the
9 question.

10 At a point later in the investigative
11 process, did you have access to Darryl Reed's
12 recorded interview, Jalessa London's recorded
13 interview, Jacobe White's recorded interview and
14 Timothy Robinson's recorded interview?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Did you compare each of those statements
17 with each other?

18 A. Yes, I did.

19 Q. And in each of those statements, were
20 they consistent with each other?

21 A. Yes, the statements were consistent.

22 Q. So, in other words, what each individual
23 reported their role was in this offense was
24 corroborated by the other actors?

25 A. Yes, it was.

1 Q. So this offense occurred on November the
2 2nd. By November the 10th, Darryl Reed, Timothy
3 Robinson, Jacobe White and Jalessa London are all
4 charged with capital murder and in custody?

5 A. Yes.

6 MS. MAGNESS: Okay. I'll pass the
7 witness.

8 THE COURT: Mr. Cornelius?

9 MR. CORNELIUS: Yes, sir.

10 **CROSS-EXAMINATION**

11 **BY MR. CORNELIUS:**

12 Q. Sergeant Meeler, I'm Skip Cornelius. I
13 think maybe we've met before, but we've never talked
14 about this case, right?

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. Did you determine what Mr. Reed's age
17 was at the time you were interviewing him?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And what was that?

20 A. Let me -- may I review my --

21 Q. Yes, sir.

22 A. 18 years old.

23 Q. All right.

24 A. Sorry. I couldn't remember if it was 18
25 or 19.

1 Q. He had not had his birthday yet in 2011,
2 so he was still 18?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. It sounds to me like you're
5 telling the jury that he voluntarily gave you a
6 statement, correct?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. He was very polite?

9 A. Yes, he was.

10 Q. Very cooperative?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Didn't refuse to answer a single
13 question or try to stop the interview in any way?

14 A. He did not.

15 Q. And his statements were consistent with
16 everybody else's?

17 A. Yes, they were.

18 MR. CORNELIUS: I have no further
19 questions at this time, Judge.

20 THE COURT: All right.

21 Ms. Magness?

22 **REDIRECT EXAMINATION**

23 **BY MS. MAGNESS:**

24 Q. Did he initially tell you the truth?

25 A. No, he did not.

1 Q. And --

2 A. Portions of the truth.

3 Q. Did Sergeant -- was Sergeant Cisneros
4 the one that conducted the interview?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Did Sergeant Cisneros confront him with
7 the fact that he already knew the truth?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And once confronted, did the Defendant
10 then tell the truth as to his involvement?

11 A. Yes, he did.

12 Q. Now, comparing that to the other
13 co-actors, Robinson, White and London, did each of
14 them tell you the truth up front?

15 MR. CORNELIUS: That calls for
16 hearsay, Judge.

17 THE COURT: Sustained.

18 Q. (By Ms. Magness) Did London, White or
19 Robinson have more than one version of what
20 happened?

21 MR. CORNELIUS: Again, calls for
22 hearsay.

23 THE COURT: Overruled.

24 A. No.

25 Q. (By Ms. Magness) They all give you one

1 version. Darryl Reed gives you his first version
2 and then when confronted with information gives you
3 the truth?

4 A. Yes.

5 MS. MAGNESS: I'll pass the
6 witness.

7 MR. CORNELIUS: Just one more
8 question.

9 THE COURT: Yes, sir.

10 **RECROSS-EXAMINATION**

11 **BY MR. CORNELIUS:**

12 Q. The whole interview with the Defendant
13 was 28 minutes 58 seconds, right?

14 A. Correct.

15 Q. He didn't give you any trouble at all,
16 did he?

17 A. No, sir, he did not.

18 MR. CORNELIUS: Pass the witness.

19 MS. MAGNESS: Nothing further,
20 Judge.

21 THE COURT: May this witness be
22 excused?

23 MS. MAGNESS: Yes, sir.

24 MR. CORNELIUS: Yes, sir.

25 THE COURT: All right. You're free