iron railing, such as might form a barrier on a street to guard a basement stair. At L., *downstage, a telephone booth. This is not used until the last scenes, so it may be covered or left in view. Ramps representing the street run upstage and off to* R. *and* L.

Louis and Mike, longshoremen, are pitching coins against the building at L. *A distant foghorn blows. Enter Alfieri, a lawyer in his fifties, turning gray, portly, good-humored and thoughtful. The two pitchers nod to him as he passes, he crosses the stage to his desk, removes his hat, runs his fingers through his hair, and grinning, says to the audience:*

SIDE 1

START ALFIERI. You wouldn't have known it, but something amusing has just happened. You see how uneasily they nod to me? That's because I am a lawyer. In this neighborhood to meet a lawyer or a priest on the street is unlucky—we're only thought of in connection with disasters, and they'd rather not get too close.

I often think that behind that suspicious little nod of theirs lie three thousand years of distrust. A lawyer means the law, and in Sicily, from where their fathers came, the law has not been a friendly idea since the Greeks were beaten.

I am inclined to notice the ruins in things, perhaps because I was born in Italy. . . . I only came here when I was twenty-five. In those days, Al Capone, the greatest Carthaginian of all, was learning his trade on these pavements, and Frankie Yale himself was cut precisely in half by a machine gun on the corner of Union Street, two blocks away. Oh, there were many here who were justly shot by unjust men. Justice is very important here.

But this is Red Hook, not Sicily. This is the slum that faces the bay on the seaward side of Brooklyn Bridge. This is the gullet of New York swallowing the tonnage of the world. And now we are quite civilized, quite American. Now we settle for half, and I like it better. I no longer keep a pistol in my filing cabinet.

END And my practice is entirely unromantic.

My wife has warned me, so have my friends; they tell me the people in this neighborhood lack elegance, glamor. After all, who have I dealt with in my life? Longshoremen and their wives, and fathers and grandfathers, compensation cases, evictions, family squabbles—the petty troubles of the poor—and yet . . . every

few years there is still a case, and as the parties tell me what the trouble is, the flat air in my office suddenly washes in with the green scent of the sea, the dust in this air is blown away and the thought comes that in some Caesar's year, in Calabria perhaps or on the cliff at Syracuse, another lawyer quite differently dressed, heard the same complaint and sat there as powerless as I, and watched it run its bloody course. (*Eddie has appeared from* L. *and has been pitching coins with the men and is high-righted among them.*)

This one's name was Eddie Carbone, a longshoreman working the docks from Brooklyn Bridge to the breakwater where the open sea begins. (*Alfieri walks into darkness off* R.)

EDDIE. (*Moving up steps into doorway of house.*) Well, I'll see ya, fellas. (*Catherine enters living room from kitchen, crosses down to window,* D. C., *waves to Louis. She wears high-heeled shoes.*)

LOUIS. You workin' tomorrow?

EDDIE. Yeah, there's another day yet on that ship. See ya, Louis. (*Eddie enters living room* D. L. *He is forty, a husky, slightly overweight longshoreman, goes into the house, as light rises in the apartment. Lights out on street. Catherine is waving to Louis from the window* D. C. *and turns to him.*)

CATHERINE. Hi, Eddie! (*She goes to him.*)

EDDIE. (*He is pleased and therefore shy about it, he hangs up his cap and jacket on hat stand by door.*) Where you goin' all dressed up?

CATHERINE. (*Running her hands over her skirt.*) I just got it. You like it?

EDDIE. Yeah, it's nice. And what happened to your hair?

CATHERINE. You like it? I fixed it different. (*Calling to kitchen.*) He's here, Bea!

EDDIE. Beautiful. Turn around, lemme see in the back. (*She turns for him.*) Oh, if your mother was alive to see you now! She wouldn't believe it.

CATHERINE. You like it, huh?

EDDIE. You look like one of them girls that went to college. Where you goin'?

CATHERINE. (*Taking his arm.*) Wait'll Bea comes in, I'll tell you something. Here, sit down. (*She is walking him to the rocker. Calling offstage.*) Hurry up, will you, Bea?