

HOLDEN
I'm beginning to see that.

BARNEY
(checks his watch)
We should jet.

Holden shovels one last bite into his mouth. He collects the paperwork and follows Barney out into the lobby.

From a distance, Holden looks towards the reception desk. Andre is there but no Tanya. Holden and Barney exit.

37

INT. GEORGIA STATE PENITENTIARY - DAY

37

Holden and Barney sit across from WILLIAM HENRY HANCE, 28, Black. Hance is quiet, simple, a young man of few words.

He's also handsome, with a glint of darkness behind the eyes.

We enter the scene mid-interview.

HOLDEN
The letters you sent...

Hance nods, not sure what Holden is talking about.

HOLDEN (CONT'D)
The FORCES OF EVIL letters?

HANCE
Oh, I remember.

HOLDEN
In one letter you said, "from now on black women will be disappearing if the Strangler is not caught by June 1, 1978."

Hance nods again.

HANCE
That's right.

HOLDEN
I understand you sent those letters hoping the authorities would look for a group of white men, the FORCES OF EVIL, who had come down to Georgia from Chicago...

HANCE

Yes, that's right. Throw them off my trail.

HOLDEN

My question is, you had already killed a white woman... so, were you planning on killing only black women from that point on?

HANCE

No, sir. I weren't plannin' nothing at tall.

HOLDEN

You planned the letters.

HANCE

Uh huh. Jus' not the killin's.

HOLDEN

When you sent the first letter... sometime in March of 1978... did you think it accomplished what you wanted it to accomplish?

HANCE

I didn't know. That's why I sent the second letter... and the rest of 'em.

Holden is already frustrated with Hance.

HOLDEN

(a little heated)

What was it you wanted the letters to accomplish?

HANCE

That's fuckin' obvious... sir...

Holden is almost done with this. Hance looks at Jim Barney.

HANCE (CONT'D)

..sorry about my language. Didn't mean nothin' by it.

BARNEY

That's alright. I understand. But, if you don't mind explaining because it isn't obvious to me... exactly what that letter was going to do for you.

Hance is suddenly very deferential. Polite.

HANCE

Yes, sir. I'll explain. I wanted the cops looking for a group of white men for the killing of Gail Jackson.

Holden interjects.

HOLDEN

Right... that part I understand.

HANCE

Then what don't you understand?

Barney steps back in to keep things from going south.

BARNEY

Mr. Hance, the police didn't know Gail Jackson even existed....

HANCE

Yessir. That's why I told them.

BARNEY

They weren't looking for her killer because they didn't know there was a Gail Jackson...

(beat)

If you hadn't sent the letters...

Hance feels he finally has someone who understands his scheme.

HANCE

Exactly. How could the cops go looking for those white men if they didn't know who Gail Jackson was... and if they didn't know who Gail Jackson was they couldn't know she had been kill't. My point now...if they didn't know who she was, and they didn't know she had been kill't, they couldn't go looking for those white folks. I had to tell them to throw them off my trail.

Barney pretends to see the wisdom.

BARNEY

Now I understand.

Hance smiles, "I'm not so stupid after all." Barney takes advantage of the cooperation.

BARNEY (CONT'D)

There was also a fourth woman who you later confessed to killing. She was actually your first victim.

HANCE

The white woman.

Now we're cooking. Holden starts listening again.

HOLDEN

Karen Hickman. We've met with a lot of serial killers Mr. Hance. We've yet to encounter anyone who killed outside of their own race. You're an outlier in our study.

Hance just stares at Holden -- where's the question?

BARNEY

Was there something special about Karen?

HANCE

Not really.

BARNEY

She was military, like you. Not a prostitute like the other victims. Was she a mistake?

HANCE

I don't know.

BARNEY

In your letters you said the "Forces of Evil" was an offshoot of the KKK. You wanted the cops to think there was a racial motivation behind the killing. Was there?

(short beat)

Did you kill the white woman because she was white?

HANCE

She was a whore like the rest of them.

Barney disagrees, in a less aggressive tone than Tench might have were he here.

BARNEY

She was a soldier. Serving her country. She and the other women came onto you at the bars. Maybe you simply wanted to be left alone?

Silence.

BARNEY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry for you, Mr. Hance.
Twenty-eight years old.

(short beat)

Yesterday we met this white fella. He killed seven people. Including some old folks. Did a Georgia jury give him hard labor? No. Did he get sentenced to death by electric chair? Oh-no. But you were. You got both. Must be a heavy burden.

Silence.

BARNEY (CONT'D)

Are you afraid to die, son?

HANCE

Yes sir.

Barney leans in.

BARNEY

The state is going to execute you. Whether that happens in three years or thirty. What you tell us today might help a lot of other people avoid the situation you're in. Could even save lives.

Hance's face softens.

37A

EXT. ALLEY - MARIETTA, GA - LATE AFTERNOON

37A

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Barney's car pulls into the alley, parks behind a dumpster.
Barney and Holden get out, step around puddles, trash.

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HOLDEN

I thought you said he's retired.

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BARNEY

He is. GBI sometimes hires him when they need to keep an operation out of the mainstream.

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