

A FEW HOURS NOW

by

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INT. CELL - NIGHT

A prisoner sits on a bed situated in the middle of his cell with his head down not showing his face. This is DON RICKLES whose face we have not seen yet.

The cell is dark and murky with black walls with etched graffiti done by prisoners before.

The noise of cells closing and opening can be heard off - screen.

Next to Don is a sultry picture of Pamela Anderson posing in her iconic red bathing suit from Baywatch.

Don lifts his head up to expose a clean shaven man. He turns his head and looks at Pamela.

DON
(To Pamela)
Well Pam. Just a few hours now.
Just a few hours.

Footsteps approaching can be heard off-screen.

Don stands up and neatens his hair with his hand.

A prison guard , who we have not seen yet, stands in front of his cell.

DON (CONT'D)
Well hello pretty boy! What have
you got for me today?

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - WIDE VIEW

At the front of the cell stands JOSEPH HAYES and he is what Don just called him. A very good-looking man in his thirties, although he does not look a day over twenty five. He wears the typical prison guard ensemble.

HAYES
I have the pleasure to tell you
to SHUT THE FUCK UP! You
worthless piece of scum!

DON
Now. Has the pretty boy had a bad
day?

HAYES
You have just -
(Looks at his watch)
- four hours and thirty five
minutes left.

(MORE)

HAYES (CONT'D)

Count your minutes prisoner
because you will die and go to
hell.

DON

What makes you think that? You
are in hell pretty boy. You! Me?
I'm just going to heaven a bit
early.

Hayes grabs a bunch of keys from his pocket and opens the cell.

He grabs Don by the collars and pushes him violently on the corner of the bed, leaving a bloody cut.

He grabs him again from the collars and pins him against the black ashly wall.

HAYES

You wanna push my buttons? You
wanna release the animal within
me?

(Pause)

Well go ahead! Make your move -
convict!

Don can see the sheer anger in his eyes.

DON

I'm not gonna make no move. I'll
take it easy only if you do!

Hayes lets go and finishes with a punch on Don's jaw.

HAYES

My name is Hayes not pretty boy!

Hayes comes out of cell holding his hand in pain and locks the cell.

CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The day of Don's trial.

The prosecutor attorney is your typical lawyer, sharply dressed and well groomed. The only distinct look are his glasses and a thick black moustache under his nose. This is SIMON COHEN.

The judge, the honourable PETER BANKS has his attention at Cohen with a pair of reading glasses at the tip of his nose. A sympathetic yet a logical man to the law.

The mother of one of Don's victims sits behind the dock with tears in her eyes. This is SHEILA WATSON. Her eyes tell us that she loved her daughter very much and now her world has come tumbling down since her daughter died.

Cohen stands like a president ready to give his inaugural speech in front of her as he questions her.

COHEN

Mrs. Watson. Could you please point to the man that you saw attacking your daughter on July 1.

She takes a sigh and wipes her eyes with a tissue. She points at Don.

SHEILA

He's the man! The murderer!

Don sits still and just glares at Sheila as she points at him. His eyes roll over to the enlarged photo of her daughter, MISSY WATSON. A photograph that depicts her innocence. He then moves his head towards the jury who now stare at him as if a stench had developed in the room.

Cohen turns to look at Don and then he faces the judge.

COHEN

Your honour. I appeal that the defendant, Don Rickles be given the death penalty for his crimes. We owe it that much to the victims and their families.

Cohen pauses for a moment and gets a glance of Missy's photo. A moment that gets to him to the heart.

Judge Banks turns over the pages of a file in front of him to see the evidence photos of all the victims.

In a quick lurk of disgust, he rolls his eyes at Don.

JUDGE BANKS

From what I have heard today and now seen, this has been a horrific act by one man. That is you Don Rickles. As you are aware that the decision for a sentence is given by the jury. That's the law.

(Pause)

If it were to me I would put you at the stake!

INT. COURTROOM - ONE HOUR LATER

Everybody takes their seats. One member of the jury folds a piece of paper and hands it over to Judge Banks.

Judge Banks opens it and sighs, maybe a bit of relief about the verdict.

JUDGE BANKS

I'm not surprised.

(Pause)

Please rise.

Don and his attorney stand to hear Don's fate.

JUDGE BANKS (CONT'D)

Young man I read your file during the recess and I have got to say that for an intelligent man who had hope, it is a shame to see that your fate is what is today.

(Pause)

Therefore it is said that on September 18th, that is two days from today, you are given the death penalty.

(Pause)

May God have mercy on your soul.

He bangs his gavel.

INT. CELL - DAY

Don lays on his bed with his head on the GREY PILLOW. He stares at the black ashly wall with chalk marks.

He turns his head toward the camera.

DON

Who the hell are you?

The camera pans round to find DOUG HAUSER sitting on a CHAIR facing Don.

HAUSER

It sure stinks in here.

He stands up and begins to inspect the room. The markings on the wall and then a BIBLE on Don's prison DESK.

DON

Hey! Who are you?

HAUSER

Oh! Sorry I forgot to introduce myself. My names is Doug. Doug Hauser.

(MORE)

HAUSER (CONT'D)

I'm with the local newspaper and I was wondering if you would answer some of my questions.

DON

What else is there for me to say? What do you WANT me to say?

HAUSER

Me? I want you tell me the truth.

DON

What truth is that then?

HAUSER

The murders. The rapes. The murder and rapes. Not in that order.

DON

Look. I gave my interviews a few days ago. I admit it. I did them all.

HAUSER

Can I ask why?

DON

Why what?

HAUSER

Why did you kill them? I mean they were girls and they were young. What makes a human take away a life that young?

Don can see that Hauser is not going to go away. He sits up on his bed and rubs his eyes.

HAUSER (CONT'D)

I mean don't you feel a bit of emotion for what you have done?

DON

OK! I did the crime and now I'm doing the time. OK! Is that what you want to hear?

HAUSER

From what I've heard you're a God fearing man. No? Don't you think that if God reads your list of sins you're gonna be denied in heaven.

DON

God? Sin? Heaven? Do you actually believe in all that shit?

HAUSER

No. You do. I'm just talking on your level.

(Pause)

Is it true that your mom once beat you because you brought a girl to your house?

DON

Who have you been talking to?

HAUSER

Your forgetting one thing. I'm a reporter. I have ways to get information. By any means necessary.

(Pause)

So? Is it true?

DON

Yeah. I remember that. My mom beat the shit outta me because I brought home a leggy blonde with huge tits and an ass that looked like was sculpted by God himself!

HAUSER

Yeesh!

DON

You know my mother was very disciplined in her ways. She caned me with the edge of a broom that was just lying there.

HAUSER

Ouch. So you say that maybe your mother had a part of you of what you've become.

DON

No! That's not what I'm saying! That one part of my life she showed me that there was plenty of time to meet girls. It was not that day!

HAUSER

What about your father? Where was he in all this?

DON

My father was a brute! I hated his guts so much that I wanted to kill him.

Hauser brushes his long hair back.

HAUSER

So...?

DON

A found a screwdriver in the garage. It was my father's. He always had a problem with me touching his things. He once beat my mother senseless. Her face was all puffed up. Bruises everywhere! You wanna know why?

(Pause)

Because of me! She found out it was me who took it and she covered for me. I won't forget that day.

(Pause)

I picked up the screwdriver and I stabbed my father ten times!

HAUSER

(Shocked)

You stabbed your own father?

DON

That's right!

Don quickly glances at his watch.

DON (CONT'D)

Just a few hours now. That's all that is left of me.

HAUSER

The execution? Are you afraid to die?

DON

Fear. I've seen it all. I joined the army and I saw fear. Grown men crying like fucking babies. What a poor sight!

HAUSER

Everyone gets scared now and then. Don't you think?

DON

Not me! I'm not afraid of death! I'm not afraid!

HAUSER

Are you telling me you're not afraid of death?

Don nods his head 'yes'. Hauser lights a cigarette and puffs a ball of smoke.

HAUSER (CONT'D)
Tell me about Missy Watson.

Don's face goes somber. As he just heard the name a dark force went by him.

DON
Whose that?

HAUSER
You know very well who she is!
One of your youngest victims.
Eight years old! I mean she was
just a kid.

DON
Look. My victims became a part of
me which I did not want to be
part of myself!

HAUSER
An eight year old became a part
of you? Give me a fucking break!

DON
You know what the human's biggest
potential is? The potential of
blood lust. I can see that blood
lust in your eyes right now. It's
like a thirst, a hunger.
Something which you can't
control. Everyone has a murderer
within them. Everyone!

HAUSER
Well not me! I like being a part
of society. A part of good not
bad!

Hauser now sees the animal in Don, a somewhat smirk is on Don's face now.

He opens a FILE and takes out a PHOTO. It's of Missy Watson. The same photo in court, that innocence, that same cute smile.

HAUSER (CONT'D)
Let me show you something?

He throws the photo on the bed. Don stares at it as if Missy is looking at him.

He goes to touch the photo but Hauser quickly grabs it.

HAUSER (CONT'D)
(Angry)
You don't get that privilege!

DON

I didn't mean to kill her! It was an accident but she was just there! I was bored! SHE KEPT TAUNTING ME!

HAUSER

Look at yourself! Your hands are red with murder and all you can say is that she taunted you?

(Pause)

Do you have a family?

DON

I have one son and a wife.

HAUSER

You know what I'm gonna do? I'm gonna wait for your son when he finishes school and then - oh it's gruesome after that - I'm gonna carve your son like a turkey. Just like what you did with Missy Watson and all your other victims!

DON

You hurt my son and I won't kill you. I'll come after your family!

Don buries his face in his pillow.

INT. CELL - A FEW HOURS LATER

Don lays still on his bed, asleep. He wakes up and turns to find Hauser gone. Hauser's file sits on his desk.

Don discovers Missy Watson's photo sitting next to him. He flinches in fear as if he has seen a ghost. He grabs the photo and scrunches it. He then goes back to sleep.

INT. CELL - A FEW HOURS LATER

Don wakes up and looks at his watch. It reads 2 am. He turns his head to find Hauser just sitting there watching him.

DON

Don't you have a home to go to?

HAUSER

Dedication to the job.

DON

You can't be here right now.

HAUSER

I pulled a few strings and the guard said it was OK.

(Pause)

Look. I'm sorry about before. My interviews can be a bit intense.

DON

Well what do you want? Didn't you get your scoop earlier?

HAUSER

What made you decide your first victim?

DON

I guess you have a photo of her? Fuck you!

HAUSER

Julie Conners. Now why did she express interest? I mean she was an innocent nurse. Also she was hot! I mean she coulda been a model!

DON

What's that got to do with anything?

HAUSER

Then it dawned me! Your dad was fucking around! I mean not just fucking around I mean he was fucking a nurse. The funny thing is that she looked a lot like Julie Conners.

(Pause)

Ah, the plot thickens! You punished an innocent girl because she looked like the woman your father was banging! I mean this shit just writes itself.

DON

OK. My father cheated on mom. Julie Conners was my release.

HAUSER

She had kids you know. Two beautiful kids. What a shame that at a young age they lost their mom.

DON

Stop it!

HAUSER

What? Stop what?

DON

This thing you're doing! OK. I killed her! I raped her and then I...slit her throat! That was my first victim.

HAUSER

Don't you ever wanna be there for your son? Your wife? I mean I met them the other day and they are good people. I'm just saddened about the fact that when the boy grows up he won't have a dad. Most importantly, he'll be an outcast. The son of a murderer.

DON

Yeah. I love my son. I sometimes regret that I won't be there.

(Pause)

I had a dream the other day.

INT. DON'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Don sits and watches football on TV.

DON (V.O.)

I was at home watching a game and I heard a scream.

Off Camera we hear a scream.

INT. KITCHEN

Don arrives in the kitchen to find his wife, SONIA and his son, REX dead on the floor.

DON (V.O.)

I went into the kitchen and found my son and wife on the floor dead.

CLOSE-UP SHOT OF SONIA'S THROAT SLIT.

DON (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Their throats had been slit.

(Begins to sob)

I found...I found...

HAUSER (V.O.)

What did you find?

The camera pans to Don with a BUTCHER'S KNIFE in his hand covered in blood.

DON (V.O.)
I found that the knife that
killed them was in my hand! My
hand!

INT. CELL - DAY

HAUSER
What did the dream mean?
(Pause)
Were they gonna be your next
victims?

DON
No! I mean...I don't know! I woke
up and I sobbed like a baby. I
looked in the mirror and said to
myself...I AM SICK! I have no
emotion!

HAUSER
Do you regret all this? The
murders? The sentence?

DON
I just wish that I was free. So I
could build a new life.
(Pause)
I don't want to die!

HAUSER
Said the man who claims not to be
afraid of death.
(Pause)
You have just one hour and 50
minutes left.

DON
How can I repent?

HAUSER
It's a bit late now. Don't you
think?

Footsteps approaching can be heard, it is Hayes.

HAYES
Quit your bellyaching! It's time
to send you to the execution
suite!

Hayes opens his cell, grabs Don and chains him by his feet
and hands. Hauser just sits and watches them.

The rhythmic clanging of the chains is heard as Don is escorted away.

INT. EXECUTION HOLDING CELL - DAY

The holding cell is cleaner and whiter than the other cells. There are no markings on the wall just the standard toilet parked next to the bed.

Don stands next to the cell door with his face pressed against the cell bars. The hallway is clear and there is no one around just a prison guard standing further away.

Hauser approaches the cell with his briefcase in his right hand.

DON

I've asked for pork chops as my last meal.

HAUSER

Pork chops, huh?

(Pause)

How are you feeling right now?

DON

Scared and ready.

HAUSER

Do you actually believe that you'll God to heaven after what you've done?

Don chooses not to answer that question.

DON

Do you have a cigarette?

Still expecting an answer, Hauser's pause is wasted on him and then takes out a packet of Marlboros out of his pocket.

Don slides a stick out of the packet and lights one.

Hauser finds a rusty, black chair and parks his ass on it.

DON (CONT'D)

Every man should be made to believe that he is going to heaven. Don't you think?

HAUSER

They don't except sinners. That's what Hell is for.

(Pause)

Your sins should be able to tell you that.

DON

My sins?

Don rolls his eyes at a CLOCK on the wall behind Hauser, which reads 3:45 am.

INT. EXECUTION HOLDING CELL - SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

A PRISON GUARD who looks like he has just come out of college approaches Don's cell with his keys dangling at the edge of his pants.

PRISON GUARD

Time for you to take your judgement.

As he says those words, we see that he sees something that seems to distress him.

In a hurry he opens the cell and bends down.

The camera cuts to Don laying on the ground, maybe dead. The prison guard looks up to find a ROPE hanging on the edge of the ceiling light.

He goes for his RADIO.

PRISON GUARD (CONT'D)

Tango Oscar to base. We have a situation in here.

INT. EXECUTION HOLDING CELL - SEVERAL MINUTES EARLIER

We see Don sitting on the bed with his head down and eyes closed. He sits and thinks about the crimes he has committed.

Flashbacks of the faces of his victims are relayed one-by-one until he sees Missy Watson.

His eyes open to find Hauser but this time he is sitting inside the cell opposite him.

DON

I gotta pay for my sins. All those girls I killed. All those families I have caused grief to!

HAUSER

What are you thinking?

Don stands up and erratically walks up and down the cell as if he was searching for something.

DON

I'm gonna end it all!

His eyes glance down at a pair of PYJAMAS, neatly folded on the BED and begins to rip them. At first attempt he fails but eventually he rips the pyjamas until the tightening rope is exposed.

He takes the rope and ties it on the ceiling light which shines on his face as he ties it.

HAUSER

Are you sure you wanna do this?

DON

What difference does it make?
Whatever happens I'm gonna die!
It might just be this way!

HAUSER

Then my job is done.

As Don wears the rope on his neck, he looks down at Hauser.

DON

What do you mean your job is done?

(Pause)

Who are you?

HAUSER

Who do you think I am?

DON

God?

Hauser begins to laugh

DON (CONT'D)

Death?

Hauser continues to laugh.

HAUSER

I'm you!

DON

Me?

HAUSER

Yes, I am you!

He continues to laugh even louder.

HAUSER (CONT'D)

Go on do it! Let this misery end.
You really wanna die in front of those people?

(Pause)

Think about your son Donny boy!
Don't do that to him!

Don does not understand and he begins to think he is losing his mind.

DON

OK! OK!

Don pushed the bed from under him and he begins to dangle.

He struggles as the rope pushes against his neck. In the midst of the struggle the rope tears and breaks dropping Don to the floor.

His eyes close slowly with Hauser who is distorted now.

DON'S POINT OF VIEW

Hauser disappears and the camera fades to black.

THE END