

Girl's diary entry read in court

Details 2010 alleged rape try

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JONESBORO — Candice Parchment spoke from the grave Wednesday.

"Well, diary, this night had me scared to death," she wrote. "I became so paranoid, started hearing things when alone in my house. Never will I forget this. I will let them suffer. It's not a threat, it's a promise."

Her words rang out inside a Clayton County courtroom during the trial of a man charged with stabbing her in the woods and leaving her body under a mattress, undiscovered for seven months. Marshae O'Brian Hickman, 21, is charged with murder and other felonies in her death. She was 15.

Prosecutors Bill Dixon and Michael Thurston argued that Hickman killed Parchment because he feared going to prison for an alleged rape attempt in January 2010. Dixon read excerpts from the diary Wednesday.

No one connected Hickman to Parchment's disappearance three months later or the discovery of her body in November 2010 until her mother discovered her diary during a 2011 move.

The diary detailed the alleged assault by Hickman and Jermaine Christopher Robinson. Both men face charges in the January incident but Robinson was not charged with murder.

"Jermaine had a rake that he hit me in the head with," she wrote. "At first, I thought it was an accident. It wasn't. (Marshae) was blocking the door so I couldn't get out."

Parchment had reportedly agreed to meet Hickman, who was 18, and Robinson, who was 15, at an abandoned house in her neighborhood. With her parents gone, she snuck out, taking only her cell phone with her. In the diary, Parchment berates herself for forgetting her pepper spray but doesn't seem to have apprehensions about meeting the two.

"I guess Jermaine and Marshae had set me up to go into the house," she wrote. "So, at that moment, I was not thinking."

Parchment alleges Robinson grabbed her and began choking her.

"I was struggling for air," she wrote. "'Please let me go,' I said. I tried to get away. My pants unzipped. Really I was scared."

A call from her mother interrupted what she believed to be a rape attempt. Parchment wrote that she told her mother where she was and Hyatt showed up a few minutes later.

"They let me go, they panicked," she wrote. "And they beg me not to tell. Anyways, I told my parents what happened. This should never had happened."

Parchment wrote that Hickman texted her almost immediately after she got home:

"Please don't tell. I will pay you \$100. Jermaine said if I didn't help him, he would kill my grandmother and I love her. He made me do it. He had a gun. Please don't say anything."

Parchment wrote that she rebuked Hickman's excuses.

"I said, 'How could your ... make someone like Jermaine peer-pressure you?'"

That question may also have been answered in court Wednesday by defense expert witness Dr. Bruce Frumkin, a clinical and forensic psychologist from Miami, Fla. During his police interview, Hickman repeated that he isn't sure or doesn't know if he killed Parchment. He admitted to seeing her on the path the night she went missing. It was the same spot where her body was found seven months later.

On the taped interview, Hickman shows police scratches on his forearm but said he doesn't know how he got them. He talks about having a dream about Parchment's death but isn't sure if it was a dream or reality. When detectives suggest he blacked out, he simply agreed.

"I feel sorry for what happened, something happened, I don't know," said Hickman. "It's possible I could have done it but I don't remember." Later, Hickman told officers, "I might've blacked out, I don't know."

Frumkin testified to testing and evaluating Hickman for about five hours last fall to determine his suggestibility, vulnerability and likelihood of making a false confession. Frumkin stressed that he was not tasked with determining if Hickman's confession was true or false.

"He's more vulnerable than the average person to succumbing to interview tactics used on him," said Frumkin. "I am in no way trying to indicate a false or true confession, just that he has an increased risk."

Hickman has an average IQ of 98, he said, so that was not a factor in the evaluation.

However, combining scores and scales reached from a variety of tests, Frumkin concluded that Hickman would be more likely than the average person to confess to something he didn't do.

"Under pressure, he is much more likely to give in to leading information," he said. "That becomes more relevant if the police is leading and pressuring."

Frumkin was the defense's only expert witness. Hickman chose not to take the stand, as is his right.