

By Tom Jones

JONESBORO, Ga. — The mother of a slain teen told a jury how her daughter's diary pointed the finger at the man accused of killing her.

Marshaé Hickman faces murder charges in connection with the death of Candice Parchment, 15, in April 2010.

Candice had disappeared from her Forest Park home one night and no one knew where she was.

Months later, men searching for scrap found decomposing remains in a nearby wooded area. Authorities determined it was Candice but had no leads on who killed her.

Then, Candice's mother, Caffian Hyatt, found her diary and police say it helped crack the case.

"This is the diary that I found in a box," Hyatt testified during the first day of trial for Hickman at the Clayton County Courthouse in Jonesboro.

Hyatt testified that two men attempted to rape her daughter three months before she disappeared.

She said her daughter was frantic when she found her running from some woods.

"She said, 'They tried to rape me.' I said, 'Who tried to rape you?' She wouldn't tell me at that time," Hyatt testified.

She said she begged her to go to police but she refused.

Hyatt said her daughter wrote down the names of the two attackers but she couldn't find them.

Then one day she was moving and saw the diary. She unlocked it and looked inside.

"I saw in the diary a Marshaé and I said, 'Jesus Christ,'" she said, near tears.

Police went to Hickman and said he confessed to the slaying. Officer Ashley Melvin said Hickman told him he placed Candice in a choke hold until she went limp.

The defense said police pressured Hickman into confessing during a two-day marathon interrogation session. Prosecutors said video of the interrogation doesn't show Hickman being pressured and they said he wrote an apology letter to Candice's mother.

Hyatt wonders if her daughter would be alive today if she had gone to police.

"I said 'Candice, somebody tried to rape you. You need to go to the police. If you don't go to the police, they will do it again,'" Hyatt said from the stand.

Robinson only faces charges in connection with the attempted rape. Hickman faces charges in connection with that attack as well as the killing.

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