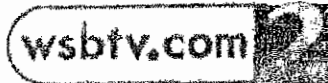


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Updated: 11:55 a.m. Friday, April 12, 2013 | Posted: 7:47 a.m. Friday, April 12, 2013

Man found guilty of murdering teenage girl

By Tom Jones

CLAYTON COUNTY, Ga. — A man has been found guilty of murdering a teenager who wrote in her diary that he had attempted to rape her months before she disappeared.

Marshae Hickman was charged with murder, aggravated assault, attempted rape and concealing a death charges. He was found guilty on all counts Friday.

During closing arguments, Assistant District Attorney Mike Thurston told the jury that the words 15-year-old Candice Parchment wrote in her diary were the key to the case.

"Y'all take a look at this when you get back, and remind yourself of what this case is about," Thurston said, as he held up the diary Candice chronicled her thoughts in.

Candice wrote in January 2010 that Hickman and Jermaine Robinson tried to rape her in an abandoned home.

"Please let me go," I said. My pants were unzipped. I was scared," Thurston said, reading from the Candice's diary.

Candice wrote that Robinson hit her with a rake and Hickman blocked the door to keep her from leaving and tried to take her phone.

"I put up a fight. They couldn't get it. I told my mom where I was at," Candice wrote.

The Forest Park High School student disappeared three months later. Police had no idea who killed her until Candice's mother found the diary and saw Hickman and Robinson's names.

Detectives said Hickman confessed to the murder and even used a doll to show how he strangled her to death. They said he wanted Candice dead to keep her quiet about the rape attempt.

Police found Candice's remains in a wooded area near Hickman's Forest Park home.

"He left her underneath a mattress, even worse than some of the trash, the garbage out there," Thurston said during closing arguments.

The defense said Hickman was innocent and asked the jury to consider Robinson's role in the crime.

"Robinson knew more about the crime and is likely the killer," defense attorney Ashley Palmer said.

Palmer also said detectives coerced Hickman into confessing by hand-feeding him details of the crime and then interrogating him over two days for nearly eight hours.

Palmer said Hickman's psychological make-up made him prone to admitting things he didn't do.

But Thurston said the interrogation video showed no coercion and if Hickman didn't want to confess, he didn't have to.

"All he's gotta do is simple. Don't want to talk anymore? I'm done talking," Thurston said to the jury.

Robinson has pleaded guilty for his role in the attempted rape and will be sentenced later. He faces no charges in connection with the murder.

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