

GORDON
CHRISTINE

HAHN (V.O.)
As you know, he's set to be executed
the day after tomorrow at San
Quentin, so....

(beat)

You don't have a lot of time.

M/W

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - SAN QUENTIN PRISON - AFTERNOON

She gets out of a taxi in front of the prison. It's a gray,
grim sight, and moves toward it.

HAHN (V.O.)

Took me most of the morning to make
all the arrangements. Turns out
you're the first woman in thirty
years the state has allowed to visit
a serial killer on the night of his
execution.

INT. SAN QUENTIN - INTERVIEW ROOM - AFTERNOON

Four bare walls and a long table. Two chairs. One window,
behind bars and chicken wire. Christine waits, alone. Then:
we HEAR footsteps approaching down the hall. A moment later,
a PRISON GUARD escorts Northcott into the room. Northcott
nods to Christine, then glances to the guard, who looks to
Christine.

PRISON GUARD

I can stay in the room if you want,
ma'am.

CHRISTINE

No, I'm...sure I'll be fine.

PRISON GUARD

All right...I'll be right outside
the door if you need anything.

(to northcott)

Twenty minutes.

The guard exits, leaving the two alone.

GORDON

Don't suppose you've got a cigarette?

CHRISTINE

No, I don't smoke.

He nods, walks to the window to a nearby structure.

GORDON

That's where they do it, you know.
That building right over there.

START

CHRISTINE

That's where they do what?

GORDON

The hangings. Ten o'clock tonight, I get to see what's inside. I hear there's thirteen steps going up to the gallows... 'cause thirteen is unlucky. Helps make sure you're gonna go to hell when you die. But I got 'em beat. I outsmarted 'em.

He looks to Christine, smiles nervously, glances back out the window.

GORDON

They're gonna let me have whatever I want for dinner. Got a steak coming, with spinach, mashed potatoes and green beans. I always wondered why they did that whole last meal thing. One of the other guys on Death Row said when you take the drop, you foul yourself, and everything you ate... comes out the other end. So maybe that's why they make sure you got something in you when it happens. They like knowing you fouled yourself on the way to --

He stops himself. Turns from the window.

GORDON

Sure you don't got a cigarette?

She shakes her head. He nods absently for a moment.

GORDON

The warden, Clinton Duffy, he's a good guy. He's writing a book about all the death sentences he's carried out in this place. Says it's called "Eighty-Eight Men and Two Women." Beats my record all to hell.

CHRISTINE

Mr. Northcott... you asked me to come to see you. You said if I did, you would tell me the truth about my son. Well, I'm here.

GORDON

Yeah... yeah, you are. But see, the thing is, I didn't think you'd really come, and now --

He's pacing, growing more agitated and scared.

CHRISTINE

Now what?

GORDON

I didn't expect....

(beat)

I don't want to see you.

CHRISTINE

What?

GORDON

I can't do this...I can't talk to you...not today, not tonight, not with what they're going to do to me. It's one thing to send a telegram, that's easy, but right now, right here, in person, I --

(beat)

I can't tell you what you want to hear, Mrs. Collins. I can't, I can't --

CHRISTINE

Why not?

GORDON

Because I don't want to die with a lie on my lips!

He turns from her, in anguish...but is he just playing her?

GORDON

I did my penance, I asked God to forgive me for my sins...and I've been good, ever since...if I commit a sin now, if I lie now...I'm out of time, I can't be forgiven again... I don't want to go to hell --

She goes around to him, faces him.

CHRISTINE

Mr. Northcott...look at me.

(beat)

Look at me.

He turns almost against his will...meets her eyes.

CHRISTINE

Did you...kill...my son?

His eyes go wide and he CRIES OUT, stumbling back and away from her.