

36:35 – 43:00 power back, expiation

DAVENPORT

Thank you for seeing me today. Do you mind if I record this?

GRIEFF

Yes.

DAVENPORT

From what I understand, you're recording it.

GRIEFF

Yes.

DAVENPORT

I promise any recording I make would be erased.

GRIEFF

I promise Dillon here will be executed, but that's hardly the point.

DAVENPORT

What is the point? I mean, you agreed to be interviewed.

GRIEFF

And you still have yet to ask a question.

DAVENPORT

Okay. Uh . . . So you were a professor of criminology at . . .

GRIEFF

(yawns) I know.

DAVENPORT

You murdered your wife.

GRIEFF

I know.

DAVENPORT

And now, sometimes people approach you with, well I suppose you'd say, cases?

GRIEFF

Yes.

DAVENPORT

And you solve them?

GRIEFF

Sometimes.

DAVENPORT

The death-row detective. The crime-solving wife killer.

GRIEFF

What sort of paper are you writing for?

DAVENPORT

I have a number of options and a lot of interest.

GRIEFF

No, I didn't ask which paper. I asked what kind because your headlines sound a little lurid.

DAVENPORT

I'm a serious journalist. I have a track record in crime writing, so if I'm sounding "lurid" right now, maybe that's on you. Okay? People bring problems to you. They bring cases. And I'm wondering why that is. You're a clever man but you're hardly the only clever person in the world. So why do all those people come here? Pouring their hearts out, asking for answers from a man who brutally murdered his wife. What's going on there, do you think?

GRIEFF

Ask them.

DAVENPORT

Do you think it's because of what you did? Do you think people find it exciting or titillating to talk to someone like you?

GRIEFF

Do you?

DAVENPORT

No.

GRIEFF

But you think all those other people might including, presumably, your readers. Man, that's a lot of people you feel superior to.

DAVENPORT

The warden said a case you take has to meet particular criteria.

GRIEFF

Yes.

DAVENPORT

What criteria?

GRIEFF

I think you should consider very carefully if you want to ask me that question.

DAVENPORT

Why?

GRIEFF

If I answer, you'll be unable to print your interview.

DAVENPORT

Why?

GRIEFF

Because you're a decent human being.

DAVENPORT

What makes you think I'm decent?

GRIEFF

The contempt in your face when you look at me. (pause) Moral worth.

DAVENPORT

I'm sorry?

GRIEFF

Moral worth. That's the only criterion. I want to do good. I have a little ability, almost no resources, and very limited time. Within that framework, I'd like to do whatever good I can. That's it. That's all there is. I want to do good.

DAVENPORT

What, so this is like, what would you call it, atonement?

GRIEFF

No. No. Atonement will come when they strap me to a table and end my life. Until then, I make do.

DAVENPORT

Why wouldn't I want to print that?

GRIEFF

Because your readers might approve.

DAVENPORT

To be honest, I think some of them might love it.

GRIEFF

It's not atonement if there's applause. It's performance. It's pleading. Applause would only spoil the project. And they won't applaud unless you print it.

DAVENPORT

So your asking me not to write the article?

GRIEFF

I would characterize it as begging. Look, whatever your opinion of me, I share it. I presume you've read the details of what I did.

DAVENPORT
Yes.

GRIEFF
Read them again. Reflect on this. Wouldn't it appall us both if, through your agency, I was made in any way forgivable?

DAVENPORT
Why did you kill her?

GRIEFF
I'm not answering that question.

DAVENPORT
Why not?

GRIEFF
It was personal.

DAVENPORT
It was murder.

GRIEFF
How much more personal do you get?

DAVENPORT
It's just . . . I . . . I'm trying to form a picture of . . .

GRIEFF
Okay. Do you have people in this world that you love?

DAVENPORT
Yes.

GRIEFF
Do you plan to murder any of them.

DAVENPORT
Of course not.

GRIEFF
Neither did I. Close your notebook.

DAVENPORT
Why?

GRIEFF
I have the strongest sense the interview is over.

DAVENPORT

I could write it up anyway.

GRIEFF

Yeah. But you won't.

DAVENPORT

Why not?

GRIEFF

What would be the moral worth?