

Just Mercy

INT. HOLMAN PRISON – VISITING ROOM – DAY

Bryan stands, hoping he can get Walter to engage this time, waiting as the guard unlocks Walter's cuffs and leaves the room. Walter looks at Bryan.

BRYAN

I know our last meeting didn't go as I hoped it would, but--

WALTER

You met my family

BRYAN

I did.

WALTER

You drove down that long dirt road, crammed into my little house with all my people, and told em you was gonna fight for me. That means a lot.

BRYAN

Minnie asked me to give you this

Bryan hands him a small envelope. Walter slides it into his pocket, then looks back.

BRYAN

If you don't mind, I have something to show you.

Bryan sits across from Walter, fixes his glasses as he tries to read Darnell's statement. He slides the paper back.

WALTER

I ain't so good with them big words.

Bryan didn't realize he couldn't read. He summarizes for him

BRYAN

It's a statemen from Darnell Houston saying he was with Bill Hooks three miles away at the time of the murder. So, there's no way he could have seen your truck.

WALTER

That's good, right?

BRYAN

It's very good. I'm going to submit this with a motion for a new trial.

WALTER

Minnie said she told you what I did...ain't no excuse for cheatin' on a woman like her. I don't know why she's still standin' by me after what I put her through.

BRYAN

She's standing by you because she knows you shouldn't be in here. And so do I. I know you didn't kill Ronda Morrison. And I want to help you prove it in court, if you'll let me.

WALTER

Man, you met my whole family and I still don't know nothin' about you.

BRYAN

What do you want to know?

WALTER

Why you doin' this?

BRYAN

Why am I a lawyer?

WALTER

Why you a lawyer in Alabama, workin' for people who can't pay you nothin'?

BRYAN

I grew up down a road just like yours, pumping sewage from our yard, sharing a playground with the pigs and chickens...When I was a teenager, my grandpa was murdered, but no one outside our community cared, because to them, he was just another black man killed in the projects. I know what it's like to be in the shadows. That's why I'm doing this.

WALTER

That's a pretty good answer.

BRYAN

Anything else you want to know? I'm an open book.

WALTER

What's someone like you do for fun?

BRYAN

I used to play piano, but...it's hard to find the time for anything besides work right now

WALTER

Well, if you gonna be workin' for me, you gotta make time to clear that head, or you'll end up crazy as a betsy bug, man.

BRYAN

What's a betsy bug?

WALTER

It's a crazy-ass bug that you don't wanna be. Ugly suckers, look like a turd with horns.

BRYAN

Got it.

WALTER

Okay.

BRYAN

Okay?

WALTER

Let's get to work, piano man. You're hired.