

ALLIANCE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Narrative Supplement

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Incident Number

AL 9903469

On Wednesday, July 14, 1999 Detectives Mucklo, Sampson and I went to the Ravenna Police department where we met with Detective Cooper. He escorted us to an apartment building on Hazen Street, the last known address of Joseph Wilkes. We were knocking on doors when Wilkes entered the building. Cooper stopped Wilkes and identified himself as a Ravenna Police officer. He told Wilkes that we were Alliance Police officers who wished to speak with him. Wilkes directed his attention toward me and I said, "We understand you are a friend of David Thorne." Wilkes answered, "Yes." I told him that we had been talking with friends and acquaintances of Thorne regarding a current investigation. I asked him if he would mind answering a few questions we may have in regard to Thorne. Wilkes agreed to talk with us. I told him that Cooper would allow us to talk at the Ravenna Police Department, if that was alright with him. Wilkes said that it was alright and I offered him a ride.

On the way to the Ravenna Police Department Wilkes asked, "Well, what has David dragged me into this time?" Detective Mucklo replied, "We'll talk about that when we get to the station." Wilkes said he had just got out of jail and was paying fines and restitution on misdemeanor charges. Mucklo changed the subject by asking Wilkes if he was working anywhere. They made some small talk about Wilkes looking for work until we arrived at Ravenna Police Department.

Inside, Cooper directed us toward an interview room. Mucklo, Sampson and I went into the room with Wilkes. The door was left open. Sampson explained to Wilkes that he was not under arrest and that he could leave

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anytime he desired. Sampson also gave Wilkes a copy of the Miranda warning to read as Sampson read the warning aloud. After being advised of his Constitutional Rights Wilkes signed a waiver agreeing to talk with us without an attorney present.

Mucklo and Sampson began the initial interview by obtaining personal information such as, "How long have you lived on Hazen Street?" The conversation quickly turned toward Wilkes and his association with David Thorne. Sampson asked Wilkes how long he had known Thorne and if he was familiar with Thorne's fiancée, Amy Davis. Wilkes said that he was familiar with Davis and answered that his relationship with Thorne spanned several years. Sampson and Mucklo discussed that relationship and "shoot fighting" with Wilkes for a minute or so. Wilkes talked about Thorne training him in a form of martial arts known as "shoot fighting" at Thorne's residence. Wilkes said that he had not spoken with Thorne for several weeks. He claimed that Thorne hung up on him the last few times he tried to call.

Sampson asked Wilkes if he had known a previous girlfriend of Thorne, Yvonne Layne. Wilkes said that he had met Yvonne once when he and David went to pick up David's son, Brandon. He talked briefly about Eric Cameron, Layne's boyfriend, and how he and Cameron had nearly gotten into a fight that day. When Sampson asked Wilkes if he had heard Layne was dead, Wilkes sat back in his chair and acted as though he was astonished. He asked, "How...When?" I leaned forward and told him to knock off the bullshit. I told Wilkes that it was no coincidence or magic that brought

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m and I together. I said, "You and David Thorne are responsible for Layne's death." Wilkes denied the allegation. I asked him to be quiet while I told him why Thorne did not want to talk with him. I showed Wilkes Thorne's phone records and told him that we knew he had called Thorne. I explained that he (Wilkes) had talked about the murder with other people and now, David Thorne was running scared. I informed Wilkes that Thorne had contacted an attorney, Bill Lentz, who told us that Thorne would talk if he was given immunity. I explained my conclusion that Thorne was willing to give up Wilkes as the murderer if he could walk away without any charges. I asked Wilkes what he had to say about that. He sat quiet and stunned.

I proceeded by telling Wilkes how he had rented a room at the Comfort Inn on the night of the murder. I told him that I knew he had purchased the knife at K-Mart. I called attention to the phone records once again as I told him that he had called David's house from a pay phone at the mall at 08:28 AM the following morning. I explained how David had taken an extended lunch that morning to pick him up at the mall. Wilkes started to tremble as he sat shaking his head in disbelief. I informed Wilkes that Layne's murder was a capital crime and he could receive the death penalty. I asked him if he was going to just sit there, not saying anything on his own behalf, while Thorne made deals to give him up. Wilkes remained silent. I said, "The only thing you have to offer is your cooperation. I can't promise you anything. All I want is the truth. Tell me what happened." Wilkes asked, "Will you tell 'em I cooperated?" I answered,

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Yes." He started to sob. Wilkes said, "I'm sorry. I killed her. I'll tell you the whole thing."

I offered to get him a can of soda before we began. When I returned Sampson started the tape and read Wilkes his rights again. (See Supplements by Sampson/transcript of tape).

After the interview concluded Wilkes asked if he was going to get the death penalty. I told him that I didn't know. I explained that his attorney would discuss that with him. He asked if I thought his attorney would be able to get him a life sentence. Again, I told him that I didn't know. I did remind him to think of himself, if his attorney brought any offer that included testimony against Thorne.

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