

## ' I'll be back,' killer says before her execution

Grand Rapids Press, The (MI) - Thursday, October 10, 2002

Author: Ron Word / The Associated Press

STARKE, Fla. -- Aileen Wuornos, a hitchhiking prostitute who killed six men along Florida's highways more than a decade ago, on Wednesday became the 10th woman executed in the United States since capital punishment resumed in 1977.

Wuornos, 46, was executed by injection after dropping her appeals and firing her lawyers.

In her final statement, Wuornos referred to Jesus and a blockbuster movie.

"I'd just like to say I'm sailing with the Rock and I'll be back like 'Independence Day' with Jesus, June 6, like the movie, big mother ship and all. I'll be back," the Michigan native said.

The execution had been delayed while experts evaluated her mental health. Gov. Jeb Bush lifted his stay last week after three psychiatrists concluded Wuornos was competent to choose execution.

Wuornos shot to death at least six middle-aged men along Florida highways in 1989 and 1990. Her story has been portrayed in two movies, three books and an opera.

She initially said the killings were in self-defense after she was assaulted by customers. But she later said the self-defense claim was a lie and she intended to rob and kill the men.

Wuornos' death warrant was for her first victim, Richard Mallory, an electronics shop owner. She later pleaded no contest to five other murders.

She spent Tuesday night visiting with a childhood friend, Dawn Botkins, who said Wuornos was in a good mood, laughing a lot and never crying.

"She was looking forward to being home with God and getting off this Earth," Botkins said. "She prayed that the (souls of the) guys she killed are saved and that by her dying they will be saved."

Terri Griffith, whose father was killed by Wuornos, said: "I'm glad it's over. It was an easy death. It was a little bit too easy. I think she should have suffered a little bit more. She was off her rocker."

Edition: 1 and 2

Section: National

Page: A6

Index Terms: Death; Prison

Record Number: 0403077500

Copyright, 2002, The Grand Rapids Press. All Rights Reserved. Used by NewsBank with Permission.