

= The Judge (Millennium) =

" ' The Judge " is the fourth episode of the first season of the American crime @-@ thriller television series Millennium . It premiered on the Fox network on November 15 , 1996 . The episode was written by Ted Mann , and directed by Randall Zisk . " The Judge " featured guest appearances by Marshall Bell , John Hawkes and C. C. H. Pounder .

Forensic profiler Frank Black (Lance Henriksen) , a member of the private investigative organisation Millennium Group , is asked to investigate a vigilante (Bell) who uses newly released convicts to execute those he deems guilty .

" The Judge " begins with a quotation from Moby @-@ Dick , a novel that the episode has been compared to thematically . Guest star Pounder would reappear several times in the series , while fellow guest Ellis made the last of his three appearances in this episode . The episode received mixed reviews from critics .

= = Plot = =

In a bowling alley , ex @-@ convict Carl Nearman (J. R. Bourne) watches another man eat his meal before following him outside , where he approaches and kills him . Elsewhere , Annie Tisman (Donna White) receives a human tongue in a package . The Millennium Group sends offender profiler Frank Black (Lance Henriksen) and pathologist Cheryl Andrews (C. C. H. Pounder) to investigate , as several people have received body parts in the post over the past few years . No connection between the recipients has been found , nor have the bodies the parts have been culled from .

Mike Bardale (John Hawkes) is a violent recidivist who has recently been released from prison again . He is approached by a man calling himself The Judge (Marshall Bell) , who offers Bardale a position in his " court " . The Judge is a vigilante , hiring convicts to mete out his version of justice against those he perceives as criminals . Bardale 's first " execution " is that of his forebear , Nearman .

The body of the man killed outside the bowling alley is discovered , missing a tongue . It is identified as a retired police officer , Detective Mellen , who had given false testimony that had sent Annie Tisman 's late husband to prison . Black realizes that the killer is motivated by the need to right wrongs such as this , killing those who have gotten away with crimes . Meanwhile , The Judge passes sentence on another victim ? a slumlord whose negligence caused a tenant 's death . Bardale is ordered to cut the landlord 's leg off while he is still alive ; the leg is later found in a postal depot in a package .

Forensic evidence on the package eventually leads to Bardale , and then to The Judge . The Judge is arrested for questioning , and knowing that there is not enough evidence to warrant sentencing him , he offers Black a job with him . Black refuses , but The Judge is released . Bardale is incensed that The Judge has manipulated the law to his own ends , and passes sentence on him for hypocrisy . Finding Bardale alone in a farmhouse , Black discovers that the convict had fed The Judge to his pigs .

= = Production = =

" The Judge " is the first of four episodes of Millennium to be written by Ted Mann , who would go on to write " Loin Like a Hunting Flame " , " Powers , Principalities , Thrones and Dominions " and the first season finale " Paper Dove " . The episode marks director Randall Zisk 's only work for the series .

The episode features the first appearance by C. C. H. Pounder as Millennium Group pathologist Cheryl Andrews . Pounder would go on to make another four appearances as the character , appearing across all three seasons . " The Judge " also marked the final appearance by Chris Ellis as Group member Jim Penseyres ; Ellis had previously appeared in " Gehenna " and " Dead Letters " . John Hawkes , who portrays killer Mike Bardale in the episode , would later go on to work with

Mann again on the series Deadwood , first reuniting on that series ' first season finale " Sold Under Sin " .

The episode opens with a quotation from Herman Melville 's 1851 novel Moby @-@ Dick , taken from chapter forty @-@ two , " The Whiteness of the Whale " . Both Millennium and Moby @-@ Dick have been described as " a basic conflict between good and evil " . In addition , both are " focused on a then @-@ modern view of the world " .

= = Reception = =

" The Judge " was first broadcast on the Fox Network on November 15 , 1996 ; and earned a Nielsen rating of 7 @.@ 6 , meaning that roughly 7 @.@ 6 percent of all television @-@ equipped households were tuned in to the episode .

" The Judge " received mixed reviews from critics . Robert Shearman and Lars Pearson , in their book Wanting to Believe : A Critical Guide to The X @-@ Files , Millennium & The Lone Gunmen , rated the episode one star out of five , finding its " contrived " plot to be " barely a subtle premise " , and noting that " the script unfortunately elevates the lead villain to high camp " . Shearman and Pearson felt that the subject of vigilantism was a suitable one for the series , and that it had " been bubbling under the surface every since the concept of the Millennium Group ... was first mentioned " ; however , they ultimately felt that the episode contained " very little to engage the brain " . Bill Gibron , writing for DVD Talk , rated " The Judge " 4 out of 5 , describing it as being " a fine , moody episode " . However , Gibron felt that Marshall Bell 's character may have been better suited to a recurring role , rather than being killed off during the episode . Writing for The A.V. Club , Todd VanDerWerff rated the episode a B- , praising the acting of both Bell and John Hawkes . However , VanDerWerff felt that " The Judge " showed Millennium to be struggling with its own concept , growing " staid " as a result of only having " the one color to play with " .