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The silence of the lambs / De schreeuw van het lam door Thomas Harris

anoniem

Summary:

Chapters 1 & 2

The FBI has tried to interview and examine all the thirty-two known serial murderers they have in custody, to build up a database for psychological profiling in unsolved cases. Twenty-seven were willing to cooperate, but the one they want the most, isn't. His name is Dr. Hannibal Lecter. Jack Crawford wants Clarice Starling to go after him in the asylum. Dr. Chilton, the head of the mental hospital, will go over the physical procedure she uses to deal with him. She may not deviate from it for any reason. Clarice meets Dr. Chilton in Baltimore. Chilton gives Clarice instructions about Dr. Lecter and he guides her through the dungeons to Dr. Lecter.



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Chapters 3 & 4

Clarice meets Dr. Lecter. After a short and fatiguing conversation with Lecter she leaves. Lecter thinks he can make Clarice very happy on Valentine's Day. Lecter says she has to look in Raspail's car for her Valentines. Clarice remembered the name Raspail. He was a patient of Lecter's and one of his victims. She'd had only one evening with the Lecter background material. The file was vast and Raspail one of many victims. She needed to read the details.

Chapters 5 & 6

Jack Crawford has got a lot on his mind besides Buffalo Bill. His wife Bella's real sick. She's in a terminal situation. He's keeping her at home. If it wasn't for Buffalo Bill, he'd have taken compassionate leave. Clarice gets permission to proceed on the Raspail car. In her own time. Raspail had been dead for eight years. What evidence could have lasted in a car that long? It seemed unlikely that even an estate as tangled and disputed as Raspail's would hold a car this long. After many phone-calls Clarice comes to the conclusion that Lecter's hint about Raspail's car is a dead end. It was mashed into a cube four months ago and sold for recycling.

Chapters 7 & 8

Jack Crawford wonders why Clarice thinks that the car Raspail drove was his only car. Raspail collected cars. Clarice decided to go to Raspail's executor, a Chinese lawyer in Baltimore. His name is Everett Yow. Clarice and Everett Yow drove to Split City where Raspail's classic Packard had been stored since long before his dead. In the car she found a big laboratory specimen jar and she knew what would be in it. The head inside the jar had been severed neatly close beneath the jaw.

Chapters 9 & 10

Clarice second visit to Dr. Lecter. He says the head inside the jar belongs to Raspail's lover, Klaus. Dr. Lecter thinks he can help tracing Buffalo Bill. In exchange for information he wants a view. He wants a window where he can see a tree or even water. Before Clarice left he said that Buffalo Bill has a two-story house. Clarice thinks she's being put off the case. But instead she may help the FBI in West Virginia. Some duck hunters found a body in the Elk River. Jack Crawford needs somebody to help him that can print a floater, among other things. They went to Virginia by plane.

Chapters 11 & 12

Clarice went through the Buffalo Bill file and examined all the files about his former victims.

The Potter Funeral Home is serving as the morgue for Rankin' Country. Clarice takes fingerprints of the body and tries to overtake the apparent cause of death. She finds a cocoon of an insect inside the victim's mouth.

Chapters 13 & 14

Clarice and Jack went through the case a second time. They decided to bring the cocoon to the Smithsonian's National Museum for an accurate examination. Noble Pilcher and Albert Roden, two entomologists have come to the conclusion that the insect is a night moth, *Erebus odora*. It's a moth that should have waited three months to come out, so it had to be raised by somebody in a greenhouse.

Chapters 15 & 16

Catherine Baker Martin left her friend's house because she wanted to get some popcorn in her own house. A brown panel truck was parked near her apartment. When she tried to help a man putting a chair into the back of the truck he hit her with his arm until she was unconscious. At 2:45 am the special agent in charge of the Memphis FBI office reported to headquarters in Washington that Senator Ruth Martin's only daughter had disappeared. Jack Crawford immediately went to the place of the crime. Catherine was probably Buffalo Bill's next victim.

Chapters 17 & 18

Clarice heard about the kidnapping of Catherine on the radio. Jack Crawford called her to say that she had to pack for two nights and that she had to meet him in an hour at the Smithsonian museum. Klaus' head also contained a bug. It was in the throat, just like the girl in West Virginia. The FBI thinks that Klaus is also murdered by Buffalo Bill. Dr. Lecter told Clarice that his patient, Benjamin Raspail, claimed to have killed Klaus. But Lecter said he believed it was probably accidental erotic asphyxia. Jack Crawford thinks Lecter knows exactly how Klaus died. He wants Clarice to ask Dr. Lecter about it.

Chapters 19 & 20

Crawford tells Clarice that Dr. Lecter has to think they're coming to him strictly for theory and insight. There's no mention of the insect in Klaus' throat, no connection between Klaus and Buffalo Bill. Dr. Lecter has to think that she came back to him because she was so impressed that he could predict Buffalo Bill would start scalping. She has an offer for some pretended privileges – stuff that only somebody powerful as Senator Martin could get for him. He has to believe he should hurry because the offer ends if Catherine dies. The Senator totally loses interest in him if that happens. And if he fails, it's because he's not smart and

knowledgeable enough to do what he said he could do – it's not because he's holding out to spite them. Crawford was afraid of interference, afraid that the Senator might make the mistake of appealing to Dr. Lecter. In Jame Gumb's basement room directly beneath the kitchen was a well, long dry. Its stone rim, reinforced with modern well rings and cement, rose two feet above the sandy floor. There was a trap in the lid, big enough to lower a bucket through. He gave no sign if he heard the cry, still fairly strong and sane, that echoed up from the black hole: 'please.'

Chapters 21 & 22

Clarice entered the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. Dr. Chilton is angry about Clarice Starling because she refuses to share information with him about her motives to see Dr. Lecter. Clarice tells Dr. Lecter about the privileges he gets when he gives more information about Buffalo Bill, but Lecter doesn't believe her. But he wants to trade for a piece of information about her. Clarice tells Dr. Lecter about her father. Lecter tells Clarice what Buffalo Bill wants Catherine Martin Baker for. He wants a vest with tits on it.

Chapters 23 & 24

Catherine tried to escape from the well, but she failed. Jame Gumb told her that she had to wash herself all over. When she saw a fingernail she knew that the man who was holding her down there was Buffalo Bill. In the shabby orderlies' lounge Clarice called Crawford. She told Crawford that Dr. Lecter asked her if the insect in West Virginia was a butterfly and that he wanted a "more interesting" offer from the Senator. Crawford told that they got an ID on the girl in West Virginia. Kimberly Jane Emberg, twenty-two, missing from Detroit since February seventh.

Chapters 25 & 26

Clarice went back to Dr. Lecter. She told him that if he would help them find Buffalo Bill in time to save Catherine Martin unharmed he would get the following: a transfer to the Veterans' Administration hospital at Oneida Park, New York, to a cell with a view of the woods around the hospital. Dr. Lecter told Clarice he wanted a little more information about her. Dr. Lecter said that the significance of the chrysalis is change. He's making himself a girl out of real girls. Hence the large victims – he has to have things that fit. The number of victims suggests he may see it as a series of molts. Lecter said that the FBI should try to obtain a list of people rejected from all three gender-reassignments centers. First they have to check the ones rejected for criminal records – and among those they have to look hard at the burglars. Among those who tried to conceal criminal records, they have to look for severe childhood disturbances associated with violence. Possibly internment in childhood. Then they have to go to the tests. They should look for a white male, probably under thirty-five and sizeable. After these hints Clarice started talking

about her childhood, the farm and the reason why she left it; because of the slaughter of the horses. During the cleaning of Dr. Lecter's cage, he was musing on how he would give Jame Gumb to Clarice Starling, and it was useful to remember Raspail. He would tell Clarice the whole story about Raspail and Jame Gumb. After the cleaning, the long, tedious process of freeing him within the cell would start. But today the process was interrupted.

Chapters 27 & 28

Dr. Chilton removed a small listening device from beneath the seat. He had been listening to the conversation between Clarice and Dr. Lecter. He told Lecter that the FBI knew that he knew exactly who Buffalo Bill was. They thought that Dr. Lecter probably treated him. They found an insect in Klaus' throat. They knew Buffalo Bill killed him. Crawford's letting Lecter think he's smart. Dr. Chilton told Lecter that there never was a deal for him with Senator Ruth Martin, until now. If he would identify Buffalo Bill and the girl would be found in time, Senator Martin would have him installed in Brushy Mountain State Prison in Tennessee, out of the reach of the Maryland authorities. He'll be in her bailiwick, away from Jack Crawford. The Tennessee State Police would take custody of him at the airport, the governor had agreed. Dr. Lecter smiled. Police are not as wise as Barney. Police are accustomed to handling criminals. They're inclined to use leg irons and handcuffs. Handcuffs and leg irons opens with a handcuff key. Like his... Jack Crawford went to Dr. Danielson, the head of the Gender Identity Clinic at John Hopkins. Crawford wanted to have a look at Danielson's files about refused transsexuals, but Danielson said that examination and interview material were confidential. But after a while Crawford persuaded Dr. Danielson and he would do the best he could. Later that day Crawford heard that Chilton had butted into the case and now Senator Martin was stepping in. The attorney general of the state of Maryland, on instructions from the governor, had authorised the extradition to Tennessee of Dr. Hannibal Lecter.

Chapters 29 & 30

After Barney warned the policemen that they had to be extra careful with Dr. Lecter, the plane left to Tennessee. Crawford called Clarice and told her about the extradition, she was furious. He also told her that he would pick her up in a few minutes to talk about it in a nearby drugstore.

Chapters 31 & 32

Crawford wants Clarice to freeze the business with Chilton. She has to keep the information she got from Lecter and freeze the feelings. He wants her to keep her eyes on the prize. After they left the drugstore, Clarice saw Barney. She asked him to give her all things they had left in Dr. Lecter's cage. Jack Crawford called Senator Ruth Martin just before she went to see Dr. Lecter. Crawford told her why

they hadn't alarmed her at the very beginning. Crawford wanted the Senator to talk to Clarice before she met Dr. Lecter. But the Senator said Dr. Chilton had already summarised the material for her. Crawford warned her not to beg Dr Lecter for information about Buffalo Bill. Dr. Lecter told the Senator that Buffalo Bill's name was William Rubin. He said that his patient Benjamin Raspail referred William to him in April or May 1975. He told her everything he knew about Rubin. He also told her that Rubin had elephant ivory anthrax.

Chapters 33 & 34

Jame Gumb is considering about the way he would skin Catherine. This one was so special for him, so central to what he was doing, he couldn't stand to wait long, and he didn't have to...

Because Clarice needed to know Catherine Baker Martin she went to her apartment. She found a couple of Polaroid pictures. The pictures were of a man and a woman coupling. She also found a sheet of Pluto's. She was pretty sure it was blotter acid. LCD.

Krendler, administrator of justice, ordered Clarice to go back to school. There was one small thing she could do. She wanted to look in Dr. Lecter's face when he said 'Billy Rubin'.

Chapters 35 & 36

Clarice sneaked into the complex where Dr. Lecter was being held. She knew that Dr. Lecter knew more about Billy Rubin. After a while Lecter started talking about 'Billy Rubin'. He said that Billy coveted being the very thing she was. That it was his nature to covet. That people begin by coveting what they see every day. Lecter said that all Clarice needed to know to find him was in the dossier. Dr. Lecter insisted that Clarice told the rest of the story about the horse and the screaming lambs, and so she did. A couple of minutes later Clarice had to leave because Dr. Chilton had found her. Clarice left with the 'Buffalo Bill'-dossier.

Lecter managed to escape from his cell because the two officers were inattentive when they tried to give Lecter his dinner. They had handcuffed Dr. Lecter tightly outside the bars, with a bar between his arms, and a lower crossbar above them. But Lecter unlocked himself with his self-made 'key'. He murdered Officer Boyle and wounded Officer Pembry heavily.

Chapters 37 & 38

Dr. Lecter grabbed a .38 revolver and fired it twice. When the police came upstairs they found Boyle and Pembry. After Pembry was brought to a nearby ambulance they started searching for Dr. Lecter, but they didn't find him. When Officer Jacobs and Sergeant Tate were in the elevator riding down to the lobby, a drop of blood fell on Tate's shoulder. There was someone above the elevator! It appeared to be Pembry... Dr. Lecter murdered the two men in the ambulance and drove the

ambulance to an underground garage at the Memphis airport.

Chapters 39 & 40

Clarice went to Jack Crawford's house. Crawford told her how Dr. Lecter managed to escape. He putted on Pembry's uniform and part of Pembry's face. He wrapped Pembry's body in the waterproof mattress cover and the sheets from his cell to keep it from dripping and stuffed it on top of the elevator. Clarice said that Dr. Lecter's escape doesn't mean Dr. Lecter was lying. He was lying to somebody, them or Senator Martin. Crawford said the FBI was working very hard on the case. They had found six 'William Rubins' so far, None of them look like much. No Billy Rubins on the bug journal subscription lists. The Knifemakers Guild knows about five cases of ivory anthrax in the last ten years. They've got a couple of those left to check. They still hadn't been able to identify Klaus. Crawford said he did the best he could to prevent Clarice's suspension. He wanted her to go to the Smithsonian's Museum because they were pretty close to finishing up on the bug. The bug inside Klaus' head appeared to be a Deaths'-head Moth, an *Acherontia styx*. It comes from Malaysia, so someone had to bring it to this part of the world.

Chapters 41 & 42

Catherine tried to escape a second time. She tied the broken end of a string at a bucket and she threw the bucket outside the well. But after a few attempts she stopped because it didn't work. Now Catherine believed that she would surely die. The FBI had found the improvised handcuff key. They had also found out that Dr. Lecter was only fooling around with Dr. Chilton and the Senator. But they didn't know if he was fooling around with Clarice too.

Chapters 43 & 44

Dr. Hannibal Lecter had checked in the elegant Marcus Hotel in St. Louis. He had signed the register under the name of 'Lloyd Wyman', a man he had just killed. Tomorrow he would shop for things he needed, hair, bleach, barbering supplies, a sunlamp, and there were other, prescriptions, items that he would obtain to make some immediate changes in his appearance.

Ardelia Mapp told Clarice that Brigham told her that Clarice would beat the hearing. Clarice was relieved, she could be near the top of the class, approved, included, chosen, and not sent away. It was a matter of working hard and being careful.

Chapters 45 & 46

Crawford, dozing beside his wife, came awake. There was a catch in Bella's breathing and she had stirred on her bed. He sat up and took her hand. He put his ear to her chest. He heard a soft beat, a flutter, and then her heart stopped... Jame Gumb had decided he would start working on his skin tomorrow. Tomorrow he

would murder Catherine and make himself a beautiful vest.

Chapters 47 & 48

Clarice noticed there was something written down to the dossier. Dr. Lecter's elegant script ran across the Great Lakes. Clarice wondered what Dr. Lecter could mean. There was no knowing what Dr. Lecter knew. Dr. Lecter said there was enough in the file to locate the killer. He said that Billy coveted being the very thing she was. That it was his nature to covet. That people begin by coveting what they see every day. Did Buffalo Bill do someone close around him? Is that why he hid the first body so well, and the second one poorly? Did he abduct the second one far from home and dump her where she'd be found quickly because he wanted to establish early the belief that the abduction sites were random? Clarice felt she was really getting close... Clarice made Crawford clear that she wanted to go on with the case. This could mean she had to accept a recycle. But all she's got left is to find out how he hunts. How he finds his victims, how he picks them up.

Chapters 49 & 50

On the morning of the fourth day, Mr Gumb was ready to harvest the hide. He came in from shopping with the last things he needed. But when he arrived at the well it came clear that Precious had fallen into it. Catherine threatened that she would hurt the poodle if he didn't give her a telephone. Jame Gumb didn't know what to do. Clarice went to Fell Street, the street where Fredrica Bimmel, Buffalo Bill's first victim, lived. She asked Mr Bimmel if she was allowed to look around in Fredrica's room.

Chapters 51 & 52

While Crawford was working in his office at the FBI's Washington headquarters, Dr. Danielson called him. He had found the man they had been looking for. He applied to the program three years ago as John Grant of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. But after the routine check with the police in the applicant's hometown, he appeared to be someone else. He'd given them an address that turned out to be a boarding house he stayed in from time to time. The police got his fingerprints there and a credit-card gas receipt with his license number in it. His name wasn't John grant at all. His real name was Jame Gumb. Clarice wanted to know what the course of Fredrica's daily life was. Staring into her lighted closet, Clarice remembered Kimberley's shoulders outlined in the blue dashes of a dressing pattern. The idea swam away and circled and came again, came close enough for her to grab it this time and she did with a fierce pulse of joy. They're darts – he took those triangles to make darts so he could let out of her waist. He can sew!

Chapters 53 & 54

Jerry Burroughs called Clarice and told her that they had found out the identity of

Buffalo Bill. His real name was Jame Gumb and he lived in Calumet City. Calumet Power and Light's came up with four possible addresses. Burroughs wanted Clarice to watch for anything they could use up there to narrow it down. Clarice told him about the fact that Jame Gumb could sew and that both Fredrica as Catherine had some warm-ups made by Juno. Clarice decided to go to Fredrica's best friend, Stacy Hubka. Stacy told Clarice that Fredrica had worked at Richards' for a long time. Richards' was a ready-made clothes shop. She didn't know anything about Jame Gumb or Mr Skin. Clarice asked her to write down the address of Richard's and the address of Ms Burdine, the merchandising manager.

Chapters 55 & 56

On that moment in Calumet City everybody was ready for the arrest. They got it down to two addresses. The FBI would take the best one and Chicago Swat's on the other.

Mr Gumb went ahead with it in the late afternoon. A careful head shot, and he'd just sacrifice Catherina's hair. Precious was worth more to him than the hair. As he hurried past the stairs, ready to go, carrying the floodlight, the doorbell rang. It was Clarice Starling, she was looking for Mrs Lippman's family. She was asking him questions about Fredrica Bimmel, Mrs Lippman and Richards'. He opened a drawer and poked around in it. Out of the folds in the back of Mr Gumb's robe crawled a Death's-head Moth. It stopped in the centre of his back, about where his heart would be, and adjusted its wings. At that very moment Clarice knew the man was Jame Gumb himself. Gumb came to know that Clarice knew who he was, he escaped quickly. But after a short, but terrifying, pursuit Clarice managed to kill Gumb. She called the FBI. Catherine was still alive.

Chapters 57 & 58

Starling was exhausted, she wanted to go to bed. Crawford told her that she hit a homerun and that she didn't have to worry about school because the hearing was cancelled. Ardelia Mapp asked her if Clarice might do something about Dr. Pilcher. Clarice had to tell Crawford how she found Jame Gumb's house. 'She went from Fredrica Bimmel's house to Stacy Hubka, and then to the Burdine woman at the store Bimmel sewed for, Richards' fashion, and Mrs Burdine gave her Mrs Lippman's old address. But Mrs Burdine never mentioned a man at Mrs Lippman's.

Chapters 59 & 60

Jame Gumb was news for weeks after he was lowered into his final hole. Everything came right after all. Clarice Starling had to work hard for her exam, but Ardelia Mapp appeared to be a great tutor. Ardelia told Clarice that Noble Pilcher called to invite her at his place. Ardelia wanted Clarice to go to him; she had to go wild...

Chapter 61

Lecter was enjoying his life as a free man in the Marcus Hotel. This evening he was catching up on his correspondence, which he would have to send through a remailing service in London. First he sent to Barney a generous tip and a thank-you note for his many courtesies at the asylum. Next he dropped a note to Dr. Frederick Chilton in federal protective custody, suggesting that he would be paying Dr. Chilton a visit in the near future. Last he addressed Clarice Starling. Far to the east, on the Chesapeake shore, Orion stood high in the clear night, above a big old house, and a room where a fire was banked for the night, its light pulsing gently with the wind above the chimneys. On a large bed there were many quilts and on the quilts and under them were several large dogs. Additional mounds beneath the covers may or not be Noble Pilcher, it was impossible to determine in the ambient light. But the face on the pillow, rosy in the firelight, was certainly that of Clarice Starling, and she slept deeply, sweetly, in the silence of the lambs...

Description of the characters:

Dr. Hannibal Lecter: 'Hannibal the Cannibal', a serial killer and a former psychiatrist.

Dr. Frederick Chilton: administrator of the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane.

Clarice Starling: a trainee at Quantico, she studies at the University of Virginia.

Jack Crawford: section Chief of the Behavioural Science at the FBI.

Benjamin Raspail: one of Lecter's patients

Klaus: Raspail's lover, murdered by Jame Gumb

Jame Gumb / Buffalo Bill / Mr. Skin / William (Billy) Rubin / John Grant: Jame Gumb adds flavour to the all-too-bland 'kill all psycho' found in so many Hollywood horror flicks. A troubled, would-be transsexual whose passions to arouse others led him into flaying women in unspeakable ways. You can also understand Gumb has a side of him that enjoys sadism. Which is demonstrated when he plays his 'basement games', in which he does when killing some of his victims (shutting off the lights, following them in the darkness, opening and locking doors for the victim to walk into). Yet we can also see the personal love of Gumb; the love he had for his dog, and his obsessions with love. What I am summarising, quite simply, is that Gumb is a freak. But how did Gumb become the way that he was, one might ask. Hannibal Lecter notes to Starling that "Billy wasn't born a criminal, no, he was made one through years of systematic abuse. His pathology is a thousand times more savage, and more terrifying." The novel helps to uncover Gumb's childhood and life.

John Brigham: shooting instructor.

Krendler: administrator of justice.

Pembry and Boyle: police officers

Catherine Baker Martin: one of Buffalo Bill's victims
Senator Ruth Martin: Catherine's mother

Title explanation:

Clarice's mother died when she was young. After her father died she had to go to the farm of her aunt. When she discovered they were slaughtering horses and lambs, she decided to run away with one of the horses. But Clarice still had many nightmares about the screaming lambs. She thought that if she could arrest Jame Gumb the nightmares would stop, that the lambs would stop screaming. At the end of the book they do. Finally Clarice could sleep deeply, sweetly, in the silence of the lambs.

Theme of the book:

The Silence of the Lambs is one of the most taunting, suspenseful, psychological thrillers ever written. This novel is harrowing, dark, moody, sober, and truly frightening, yet exhilarating. The intimate and disturbing characterisations of mass murderers who mutilate their victims (usually female) were shocking, particularly the character of the evil Hannibal Lecter.