

THE STATE

V.

DONTE STOKES

APPELLATE CASE No. 2013 - 001558

CHARGE(S): MURDER; POSS. WPN. DURING VIOL. CRIME; ATTEMPTED MURDER

WARRANT/TICKET NO(S): M-807225; M-807227; M-807230

RECEIVED

AUG 14 2013

DEAR COURT OF APPEALS,

SC Court of Appeals

I RECEIVED YOUR request for me to write the Courts on 8-13. I Am Appealing because I feel like some of my Constitutional Rights were violated and I don't think I was treated fair during my Court Process in Orangeburg County. I was arrested on June 21, 2012 after being force to Ride by a Co-Defendant at Gun point cause I heard there plan and he didnt agree with me leaving from there site. The reason I was at Rakeem Brown house at the time because I found out me and him share a sister when I came back from Clinton SC with a girlfriend due to a party my mom has for her and my grandma which is diseased; every year. I was only home a couple of days and had no idea I was going to be force into a car while Jerry Mcknight and Deshaun Fordham Commit a arm robbery that lead to someone being killed. We were stoped minutes after the shooting on 301 going back to Orangeburg SC. Before being stoped my Co-defendant Jerry Mcknight immediately told the rest of my Co-defendants that if they feel the need to tell something put his gun in my hand. So I kept quite because I was scared of what he might do to me after hearing him boast about what he and others did to his cousin which was murder him. He also kept saying how he was already facing too many charges. So when the cop asked the driver to exit the car Jerry reminded me that he know where my mom worked at after hearing me tell it to Rakeem Brown at Rakeem house. WHEN the police asked everyones name I gave him a fake name hoping he would be aware of my situation. So when we got to the police station I was scared to say anything because I didnt know what to expect from Jerry. So I did things like signing my real name after telling them a fake name and ask question about Gun powder residue so they can know they had the right people without actually saying they did. On June 22, 2012 Me. Riley Godwin came to the jail and said if I help him he would help me because I was being accused of using a gun that was involved in an early homicide in Jamison SC. So I gave a statement out of fear and under Durrest and put a Gun in my hand like Jerry wanted because I also remembered what he said about knowing where my mom work and after hearing him talk I don't think he will mind hurting someone. I also told Police about what I heard him say about that other murder. On Monday June 24, 2012 I had a Court hearing about what they was charging me with and went there with Jerry and Deshaun and they where asking questions and I was studdering over my words, so then Jerry "said" don't worry we gone blow him up with time, and make sure his mom die. He also stated that I must don't know his "lil goon" is home and he was speaking on Rakeem Brown. So they ended up leaving out the Court room before me and when I was finish I immediately told Authorities that I fear for my life, and didnt want to be in the same Jail with them. So the same day June 24, 2012 I was transfered to Bamberg County Jail, and was there most of my year locked up until I Requested to go back to Orangeburg County after 8 months cause I couldnt see my son which is only 4 years old and need to be 12 years old to see me in Bamberg Jail.

That's when I really gained the knowledge that Rakeem Brown wasn't locked up, and I really begin to fear for my mom's life. From what I seen the rest of my co-defendants were scared of Jerry McKnight, but would also do what he wanted when he wanted it. The lead investigator was fired because he wanted Rakeem Brown charged, but another police which knew Rakeem Brown didn't want him charged, so at this point I was scared to go home also, so I was preparing myself to do time for something I didn't do when I got my motion of discovery because I learned that they would have my statement like I had there's, and I wasn't trying to sacrifice losing my mother. There was also a conflict of interest with me and my lawyer because we never spoke about my case until a week before trial, but I seen her before then just so she can tell me she haven't spoke with the Solicitor "Don Sorenson" about my case. I was never offer a plea or taking up for a bond my whole stay in jail. But Friday when my lawyer sent her boss to talk to me she was scaring me up to take 35-40 years plea, but I told her that I don't think that's fair to me because I told my lawyer Ms. Ullman my situation before about why I placed a gun in my hand and that I was scared for me and my mother, but they refuse to consider that. So Monday July 15, 2013 I had numerous of lawyers inside a room with me telling me if I don't take 35-40 years I will get life if I choose to go to trial. So I was under pressure to take time that I don't believe I deserve. Ms. Ullman also gave me evidence on the outside of my motion which Mr. Sorenson gave to her weeks before trial. I would like the Court of Appeals to help me by taking everything into consideration because I was under duress at the time when I plead "no Contest" to something I didn't do. There was also a poor investigation because the lead police was fired. It was 5 people in the car when we got stop, but they only charged 4 people and in the state of South Carolina there is a "Hands OF ONE LAW" and I feel everyone should be been charge. During My plea in court the Solicitor "Don Sorenson" was saying he think that Scientific evidence proves things when nothing Scientific was found of mine. Then I feel like I was treated a certain way because I was the oldest. So I hope the Court of Appeals can give me a fair chance in court because 35-40 is a long time when you didn't do no harm to noone, but my lawyer just wasn't fighting for me either. So please look into my situation because I was being pressure, force, and was under duress. I also hope the Court can give me a fair plea or trial hope to hear from the Court soon. But I am scared to go home, but I don't want to be in jail for the rest of my life away from my family and I hope the Courts can help me.

Sincerely,

DONTE STOKES

Appellant

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Doem A2-59

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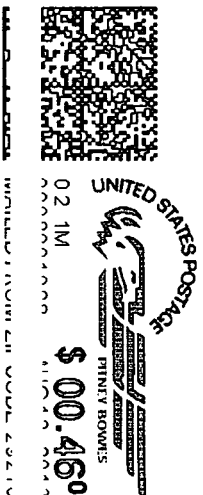
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SC Court of Appeals

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