

Interview with LC Riley

[00:00:02] **LC Riley** My name is LC Riley. I'm a Burge torture victim, survivor. My problems with Burge started in 1972. From there, they escalated as far as them coming into my mom's house looking for me and it all happened one day where they picked me up and they wanted to know who had pistols in the neighborhood. I couldn't tell them anything and they was slapping me around. And this was 1972, they were slapping me around. Wasn't Burge exactly. It was some of his cronies, as they would call him.

[00:00:55] **LC Riley** So I gave them some phony names of some people and from then on they couldn't find the guys that they were looking for who I told them it was. And so from then on they was picking me up, harassing me, chasing me all the time. You know, a lot of times I was only charged with, you know, disorderly conduct or something because they kept me out most of most of the day trying to get me to tell them anything. From then on, it escalated into picking me up for robberies that happened, trying to make me confess to them. All kinds of things, they even went so far as to plant weed in my daughter's baby stroller one day just to take me away from a crowd of guys that was shooting craps in the playground. So, that resulted in me actually getting 8 to 12 years in penitentiary. Uh. I actually won that case on appeal. Because the evidence that they had, they had the witnesses lying. One witness, a Ms. Rose Watkins, would never tell them that I did it, so she moved out of state because they was harassing her so, so badly that she moved out of state, and I believe she moved to Indiana or someplace. But, on the day of the trial, my mom and my sister had found this lady and brought her to court. And she testified that it wasn't me and she told the prosecutor that, no, it wasn't him and I moved because these officers was trying to make me say it was him.

[00:03:06] **LC Riley** I guess I won the case on, let me think back, it was so many years ago. I think I won the case on prosecutorial misconduct whereas the prosecutor got angry in the courtroom and called my mom and the witness a peanut gallery, I think it was. And so I won the appeal on that behalf. Even though I was out on bond on the case, appeal bond on the case, you know, it cost a lot of money for that kind of stuff back then. So my mom had put her house up and everything, and I was out, so.

[00:03:55] **LC Riley** That's just another scenario of what really went on back then. After then, they was coming to my house. Thank God for the guy next door who was, he worked for the Chicago police, but he was only a tow truck driver. And they came in my house and I saw. I was eating cereal and they came to the door. And I asked my little brother not to open the door for him, but he did it because he was such a moral guy. He

opened the door for him and they came in. So I went in the basement and I hid it. And, you know, I don't know what they looking for me now for. And I hid and they was all over the basement and I was stooped down. I guess they were so frantic that they just missed me. But my next door neighbor came down and he asked them why was they there? And they they said they were looking for Lewis and he told them no Lewis lived here. Well they said LC.

[00:04:57] **LC Riley** So he said, well do you have a warrant to be in this house? They were like, we didn't need a warrant. He said, you need a warrant to be in this house and he showed them his badge and what have you. And they left and that was really what I felt like every time I could see these policemen because they used to ride four in a car, detective car, and I could see them. Wherever I went to, if I went to the grocery store, I walked through the alley to the grocery store because you could see them on the street through the gangways of the houses and everything. And I'm just wondering why these policemen steady messing with me. They steady messing with me. I beat a case out, I think that was really what got them at me a whole lot then, so.

[00:05:51] **LC Riley** Yeah, they bothered me for years and then after that, they didn't bother me for a couple of years. And I found out why they didn't bother me for a couple of years because they were someplace else bothering some other people. And, you know, after doing time, going to jail, spending months in the county jail, and you get to know these same guys, you know these same guys, even though you didn't know them on the street but you know them in jail. And they talk about Burge and his Midnight Crew, and how they just put pistols on guys and torture guys and beat them up and everything. And, you know, it was just, something that, you know, kind of sticks with you.

[00:06:40] **LC Riley** So, when I turned 30. I believe I was 30, 29, 30 or so. They were still out there harassing people, but I had no problem with them because I went to the West Side and I stayed over there a lot. I lived in the city on 71st St, so I didn't. But any time I would come back out to the hundreds to, you know, like visit my mother, you know, you don't see the people that you used to see all the time. And I was like, where is everybody at? And they said Burge and them came through. They say he was locking up every damn baddie from 95th to Altgeld Gardens. And it was clear out there. I went to Job Corps, came back. None of the people was around that I used to be around. I'm like, everybody's gone, you know.

[00:07:34] **LC Riley** So, fast forward to this case that I was in, I was locked up on on this time. When they picked me up, they picked me up for a busted tail light. But not them,

but the regular police stopped me because I had a busted tail light. And it wasn't even my car, I was fixing the car for somebody, and took it around the corner to see if the brakes was OK and everything, and I was stopped by the police. So, when the police stopped me, I showed them my license, everything, and well they held me over for a minute and then all of a sudden detectives pulled up. So I'm like, why do you need detectives to give me a ticket? And he was like, no, they want to talk to you.

[00:08:33] **LC Riley** So they took me out the car, handcuffed me and took me down to the police station and then they start asking me about a murder, an armed robbery with an ice cream truck. I say, I don't know nothing about that. It was like, oh, yeah, you know about it, because somebody said you was there. I say, well, I wasn't there. Yeah, I had read about it in the paper. I saw it, I knew about it. And even in the neighborhood, it was word about who did it and I told them I don't know nothing about that. They say, oh, yeah, you know something about it. So they said, well, we're going to have to hold you, we can hold you here for at least 72 hours. I said, man, I don't want to be locked up for no 72 hours, I did nothing.

[00:09:31] **LC Riley** So they said, well, let's go upstairs. And they took me upstairs and on the stairway going up the stairs, they tripped me and busted my chin on the stairway. So, I got up to the interrogation room and they handcuffed me up against the wall.

[00:10:22] **LC Riley** They cut the lights out. Left me there for a little while. Then they came back in. I can imagine it had to been an hour later or so. And they said, well, you say you wasn't there. Do you have any witnesses say where you was that day? I say, sure, I can tell you where I was at, I was at Mr. B's Playhouse playing pool with the peanut man. And he's an older guy, he sell peanuts. So they said, well, your fucking story better check out. And they left me. Cut the lights back off and left.

[00:11:16] **LC Riley** And didn't come back for, I know it had to be three or four hours because I fell asleep up against the wall, up against the wall with my arm handcuffed. And I fell asleep trying to lay on retainer ring. So when they came back in, they cut the lights on and one of them grabbed my pants, my cuffs of my pants and snatched me off the bench whereas my head hit the back of the bench, and I think it tore some ligaments up in my wrist from the handcuff holding me. And he hit me upside the head with a rolled up newspaper and threw some peanuts in my face and said, you just a fucking liar. That guy say he'd never saw you a day in his life.

[00:12:18] **LC Riley** And I said, you're wrong, sir. I said I been knowing that guy for over 10 years. He wouldn't tell you that. He say, well he fucking damn well did. So you better come clean up in here. I'm gonna show you what we do with niggas. I said, man, I don't know nothing about that case, man. I don't know nothing about it. He said, well we'll show you what we do. I already knew what they do. You don't have to tell me what you do. I know what you're about. And I think I got mad at one point and I said, I ain't did shit, you motherfuckers need to let me up out of here.

[00:13:09] **LC Riley** And that's when Murphy, I think his name was Murphy or something, grab me around my throat and slapped me with the phone book. He say, you know what's going on, we need to know. I said, I don't know nothing, man, I don't know nothing. They say, the choice is yours. And they left back out.

[00:13:49] **LC Riley** It was... It was a nightmare there. Because you can always go back in your mind and think about the same things happened to people like Melvin Jones. He's deceased now. And he used to, he lived right around the corner from me, he used to tell us how these guys was. And you'd think about the stories that you hear, you heard. And you'd be sitting up in jail talking to these guys and you'd be like, that nigga lying, they ain't did all that. You know? And, the reality of it is, it happened to you.

[00:14:45] **LC Riley** So you got these police out here that's actually putting cases on people that they didn't do. Sure, I knew about the robbery and everything. I knew about it. I knew a whole lot about it, but I wasn't there. It wasn't me. And the other guy that they did get, a rappie of mine, a codefendant, his dad was pretty good with a lot of people, and his lawyer was an ex cop that used to run with Burge and they got him to say that we was there, we was all there. And it was another guy that did the shooting and it was his mama's car and his pistol. But he got off with three years after testifying against me.

[00:16:06] **LC Riley** And I just couldn't believe it. And I couldn't even believe that the judge would tell me something like, it's you and people like you that's a cancer in our society. Whereas you let somebody go that told you that it was they pistol, even though they didn't do the shooting, it was his car, well, his sister's car. I sat up and testified that trying to drop a statement that I made. And you tell me I'm the cancer in the society when you actually got the guy that did it. His own lawyer telling you he was there. I'm not admitting to it at all.

[00:16:56] **LC Riley** So. I ended up with 40 years. I did 19 and 9 of them. And the whole time I was locked up, I fought the case. I tried. Until Flint Taylor and People's Law Office

start coming to visit me years later, it was when they really, really, really was on Burge because so much had came up.

[00:17:34] **LC Riley** You know, you can remember a lot of stuff about that kind of stuff. And he just told me, he said, we just really need a deposition from you. We need 20 depositions from you if we can get them. He said, we can't give you any money for it because the statute of limitations is over with with him, but we can get him on something, you know, we just need. So they came to visit me, I imagine what had to be... About four years before I came home, they came to visit me at least three times for a deposition and one more time, twice, I think it was, right Gwen? When I came home, I went to the special prosecutor's office.

[00:18:33] **LC Riley** I gave my deposition there. They depo'd me at my mama's house. You know, nothing could be done. But, you know, the preparations and everything I'm happy for, you know, that. Finally, finally, I was happy when they just convicted the guy on just lying. I was happy for that, you know. You know, he ruined my life. They ruined my life. They ruined my life as far as watching my kids grow up. My daughters was 10, 11 when I left. They was 30 years old when I came home with babies. I was a granddaddy. You know, I missed all of their lives. I missed my life with my mom. Now she's sickly, you know, I'm taking care of her as best I can right now, and, you know, it's just...

[00:19:44] **LC Riley** You know, you think about all the things whereas even if I wasn't a good guy, I wasn't the best kid, but I was the kid that stayed home and cut the grass and I wait till the weekend to go out and party and I play basketball through the week, you know, that kind of stuff right there. I dropped out of high school. You know, I imagine most of us did back then with the gang banging going on and all that kind of stuff. You get yourself caught up in your community, in your neighborhood as far as that kind of stuff is concerned. And I was one of them guys.

[00:20:28] **LC Riley** But, you know, you never figure that you end up 20 years away from home. You leave home one day and say, I'll be back in a minute and you never show back up. That's real. That's a reality. That they can take your life just like that. [snaps fingers] Without even killing you. You know, they can ruin you and then after reading so much about it and finding out about the cloth of secrecy, and as I read [indiscernible], I have so much paperwork and I actually would have had all my court transcripts, but the year that we got ready to move out here, I threw all that crap away. I was just through with it.

[00:21:29] **LC Riley** You know, I probably got some. And I do have paperwork from Flint Taylor and them. And they find out about the cloth of secrecy. And when these same officers became lawyers and prosecutors and then they became judges and, you know, all this kind of stuff, I see why nobody want to appeal nowhere, you know, back then. So I was fortunate to win that first appeal for sure. Because the prosecutor actually made that statement in the courtroom. So I was really glad to win that one. I think if they had declined me on that then it probably would have been a problem then with the justice system. So because I did have a very good lawyer then. So.

[00:22:33] **LC Riley** And for somebody to accuse you of sticking up for 30 dollars, but you can get one of the best lawyers, it don't match up, do it. No, I don't. So, you know, like I said, I wasn't the best kid in the world, but I wasn't the worst. And I didn't deserve nothing that happened to me. At all.