

Interview with Marvin Reeves

[00:00:00] **Marvin Reeves** Yeah, I mean, basically, you know, like you say, as far as communication go, you know, you have open avenues for people to communicate with you, and you can explain only what you see or hear. You don't know personally. So therefore, to come out and talk to somebody that has had this happen to them, you know, especially face to face where they say expressions tell a thousand words. Sometime in people conversation, if you know anything about facial expression, when you talk to a lot of us guys, you see pain in our face.

[00:00:39] **Amanda Rivkin** Oh yeah.

[00:00:39] **Marvin Reeves** You know, cause these things truly actually happened. You know, and a lot of people might say, well, no that probably didn't happen. They wouldn't do that because we're human beings and human beings have a sense of remorse, a sense of feeling. To where you feel like, well, you know, why would somebody do that with no explanation? And right to this day, there's still no explanation why these guys did what they do. You know, you can't really blame it on racism. You can't blame it on, you know, well, maybe they was part of the Ku Klux Klan back in the day, or maybe they was just raised wrong. You know, I mean, that's just like asking a serial killer, why did you kill? And we all know that in life, people are what they call opportunists. When the opportunity presents itself, they take advantage of the opportunity.

[00:01:39] **Marvin Reeves** So therefore, when these guys were in position of authority and it's a need to deter crime by the upper echelon, meaning their bosses, you know, you go out and you find people that may be less fortunate like ourselves. Poor neighborhoods don't understand the law, you know, so therefore, it's like taking the kid in a candy store and telling them you can't eat the candy. As soon as you turn your back, you know what they're going to do? He gonna eat the candy. Those guys, took advantage of the situation at hand and they abuse their position of authority when they come to the neighborhood, get you guys take taken to undisclosed areas and torture and torture them into confessions.

[00:02:33] **Amanda Rivkin** Can you take us back to the day that it happened to you?

[00:02:36] **Marvin Reeves** Yeah. Well, I mean, I was staying over on 59th and Wabash. And I've always been close with my younger sisters. Even in growing up, as you can see like today, one of my sisters over here. Always been like that. And, you know, I was

working in an an alley. What they call alley mechanic, you know, you're not licensed to run this operation, but you figure a way to make a living. And who's going to refute you to make a living? Because, you know, I had four kids I was raising. So therefore, you know, somebody's got to put the bread on the table. And being a man, that's what I took the initiative to do.

[00:03:22] **Marvin Reeves** So, you know, after leaving work, I go home. I get in the bed, me and my old lady there. You know, I don't know anything. It's helicopters flying around. SWAT team on the tracks, cause we lived by the tracks. SWAT team on the track. Police in the back. Police in the front. Kick the door in, guns drawn. You know, holler the N-word, don't move, you know, I blow your f***ing brains out. I go, wait a minute, what's going on? So I'm thinking, well, you know, it's the police so, you know, it's got to be a mistake because believe it or not, a week prior to that incident taking place, the police was around the building. And they say that they got a call that somebody was walking around with a shotgun. And I'm like, good police on they job. You know, if that was the case. Not all the time, not knowing that there might have been surveillancing me for what somebody told them that was supposed to happen.

[00:04:33] **Marvin Reeves** So when it did occur, I'm like [indiscernible] to what's going on. They don't give me a chance to put no clothes on. You know, they put my hand behind my back, they handcuffed my feet, and they carried me out to the paddy wagon. And that was the last time my family seen me.

[00:04:51] **Amanda Rivkin** Were your hands in front or?

[00:04:52] **Marvin Reeves** In the back, you know, handcuffs were in the back. And they took me to a location, that I found out was 39th and California. I think that's Area 3, you know. And they took me there and... When I got there, they put me in a room and they started questioning me. And they was questioning me about, you know, a guy named Eric Wilson, that I know grewed up in the neighborhood, know his family, been knowing him since he was a baby. And then they asked me about my codefendant, Ronald Kitchen. Been knowing him since he was a baby. His grandmother is my godmother. I've been around these gentlemen ever since I was nine years old, and I'm about 10 years older than they are. So when I was around, they were babies.

[00:06:08] **Marvin Reeves** So when he questioned me about it, and then he questioned me about a guy named Willie Williams. So at the time I'm dating Willie Williams' cousin. Her name is Cassandra Ellerby. So I'm like, Willie Williams. And I know this guy is in jail.

So I asked the officer, I say, is this about something that Willie Williams told y'all, why we down here? They went, no no, that ain't got nothing to do with it. And then they start asking me about the deceased. Did I know, and they start calling the names and I said, well, no, I don't know them. Never seen them before. When they asked me, had I been over there? Over where? Then they told me where they live at. Over here on 60th and Artesian. I said, no, what am I gonna go over there for? I don't know nobody over there, I don't hang over there.

[00:07:15] **Amanda Rivkin** Sorry, 60th and Ortiz?

[00:07:17] **Marvin Reeves** Yeah, it's like 60th and Artesian.

[00:07:21] **Amanda Rivkin** Oh, Artesian. OK.

[00:07:22] **Marvin Reeves** Right to this day, I don't know if those people stayed on Artesian or Campbell. I don't know where they stayed at. But according to the record, I think they stayed over on Artesian. So, you know, all the time this guy done fed them this line of lies.

[00:07:43] **Amanda Rivkin** This guy being Willie Williams?

[00:07:45] **Marvin Reeves** Willie William, yeah. He trying to get out of jail and he trying to use us as scapegoats. So he called the police and he tell them, a couple of my friends committed just horrible crime that he done read in the newspaper. And I'm saying to myself, I asked the police, I say, well, this guy Willie Williams is in jail and he's a compulsive liar. So you got us here at the station for nothing. So I don't know if they took that in consideration or not. Now mind me, I've been there at the police station for at least seven hours at this point. The police came in and one by one they questioned me. I remember a few of them name. I've learned one name was Detective Doll. I learned another one was Detective Ptak. And I learned another one was Detective Kill.

[00:08:53] **Marvin Reeves** So at one point, after questioning me lengthy, they took me down to 11th and State. And I'm asking, where am I going? They say, you going to take a polygraph test. So I'm like, OK, polygraph test, you haven't did anything, you go down here and take a polygraph test. Polygraph tests show that, you know, that you're not lying, you don't know these people, never seen them, and we go take the polygraph. And they put me back in the police car. They take me back to 39th and California. And so just

out of curiosity, I ask the officer, I say, how did I do? He turned around. And hit me in my face and he said, you failed. And I knew at that point something wasn't right.

[00:09:59] **Marvin Reeves** You know. So they took me back to the station. And when I got to the station, they took me upstairs to a room and they put me in a room and they left me handcuffed. I never will forget they had some food that they had got from a McDonald's or either a Burger King. And he brought it to me, Detective Kill. And he set it on the table. He said, you hungry? I say, yeah. He say, that for you. He said, oh, by the way, wait a minute, sign this paper here so you can go home, til you sign this paper we'll let you go.

[00:10:50] **Marvin Reeves** So I thought about what my mother told me a long time ago. Cause sometimes in a crisis, I don't know if [indiscernible] people believe in spirit, but, you know, we believe in the spirit of the Creator. And in time of trouble, He send messages. And when he gave me that paper, I was finna sign it, and I heard my mother's voice say, boy, read what you sign, for one day you'll sign your life away. And that voice came to me and I read that paper. And that people had said that I had went over there and commit bodily harm to these people about some money, drug money that they were supposed to owe me. And I told them, I'm not no drug dealer. I don't know these people, and they don't owe me no money.

[00:11:51] **Marvin Reeves** And that's when he snatched the paper back and he took the food. And I heard him tell the officers outside the door that [indiscernible] could read. And from that point forward, that's when the fighting started. You know, because at one point they did take me in the room and they showed me pictures of the deceased people, but these were pictures where they were alive and they asked me did I know them and I told them no. And then after everything took place and they found out that I could read, that's when the fighting and the kicking started. And they, like you, did this. And they were showing me pictures of the crime scene.

[00:12:40] **Amanda Rivkin** When you say the fighting, what's the fighting?

[00:12:42] **Marvin Reeves** Well, they basically will come in and jump on me. And they like, well, you know, you're going to sign that paper. Said I'm not going to sign the paper. I didn't do. And every time they came in and I refused to sign the paper, that's when they started hitting and stomping on me.

[00:12:59] **Amanda Rivkin** Where were they stomping on you?

[00:13:02] **Marvin Reeves** Who?

[00:13:02] **Amanda Rivkin** Where were they stomping on you?

[00:13:04] **Marvin Reeves** Like, in my chest. Because at one point they had me sitting in a chair and my hands were behind my back and I had kind of dozed off to sleep. He come in, open the door and, Detective Ptak did, and he kicked me in my chest. And when he kicked me in my chest, I fell over and I fell out the chair. When I fell out the chair I was gasping for air like he had kicked me in my solar plex and I couldn't breathe. And from me leaning down on the ground, I seen Detective Kill come over there. And he went to try to kick me in my face. And I turned my head and he kicked me in my head. And they start trying to punch me in the face. That went on for about maybe two or three seconds, then they left out.

[00:13:59] **Marvin Reeves** Then about 15, 20 minutes go past. They come to the door, they open the door. And they show me that they had Mr. Kitchen behind them. And I'm looking right, you know, OK, they got Mr. Kitchen. So now he had to been in the room across the hall because after then, I heard screaming and hollering and I'm like, well, they over there torturing him too. And I never actually knew where Mr. Wilson was at. Because Mr. Wilson was there, Eric Wilson. He was there. And after so much violent beating and stuff like that, you know, Ronnie finally, he signed the statement. And the statement was saying that he and I went over there collect the debt from these people, and they refused to pay up, and we caused the bodily harm to them. And that never happened.

[00:15:08] **Marvin Reeves** You know, but I guess, you know, pressure busts pipes. And I truly, truly understand that, you know, he did what he had to do to stop them from kicking and hitting on him. Because, according to the records, when we get to the County [Cook County Jail], you know, they had kicked him all in his balls and, you know, they messed him up real bad. And they beat me in my face to a part where I'm dark skinned you really can't see. But if you look closely, you see, I got permanent black eyes. I never go nowhere. Never go nowhere.

[00:15:47] **Amanda Rivkin** Yeah I see it right here.

[00:15:49] **Marvin Reeves** Yeah. And when we went to court, you know, I'm thinking all this going to be over with when we go the court. So we go to court and my eyes are shut from my face being swollen. And I hear a large gasp in the courtroom, which must have

been my family. And I heard them out there crying. And I heard somebody say it don't even look like him. You know, and our lawyers asked the judge to have them send us to the doctor. Because they refused to send us to the doctor. And the judge had to order them to send us to the hospital. They sent us over here to Cermak, which is they hospital. Cermak sent us out to the County. That's how messed up we was.

[00:16:45] **Marvin Reeves** And behind that, it was just a long line of, you know, thinking what if? How did this come about? Why would they let a guy in jail lie on us, send us to prison, and let him out, you know, why would they do this? But come to find out they just generally crooked cops. And they never cared about him. They've never cared about us. All they wanted was the statement where they can get a conviction. And for some reason, it always came to mind, not only do you cheat us out of our life, you cheat the family members out of justice. Because here it is, you've got these deceased people family members thinking that we the ones that commit bodily harm to they family. We don't even know they family. And this is what the state's attorneys do.

[00:17:47] **Marvin Reeves** The police job is to bring them in. And the state's attorney job is to prosecute. And I never did understand why, you know? If guys are innocent, I don't feel that they should go through the extreme length to try to prosecute people. Especially if they innocent, but to the point where they really don't care. And it sadden me because I've always been for the justice system. Cause, as you can see, my sisters around me all the time. And I would want justice for my family if somebody committed that type of crime in my family. But how can I be assured that that's the person that committed the crime on my family when y'all do what y'all I do?

[00:18:28] **Marvin Reeves** And believe it or not, it's a hurting thing. Because what they took from you, they could never give you back. No money in the world could never give it back to.

[00:18:44] **Amanda Rivkin** Did you ever sign the statement?

[00:18:45] **Marvin Reeves** No. I didn't sign no statement. My codefendant signed a statement.

[00:18:50] **Amanda Rivkin** That's what you were convicted on the basis of?

[00:18:52] **Marvin Reeves** Yeah. I was convicted because he signed the statement. In actuality, I feel like they would have sent me to prison without his statement because

that's the way the system is. They play a cruel game. They play judge and jury. So therefore, when the police bring you in, state's attorney prosecute you, the judge send you to jail because those his golf buddies. So therefore, how do you stand a fair chance when you sitting in front of a jury that don't have no knowledge of the law, don't know you, all they know is you sitting across from them. And the first thing come in they mind is, well they had to have something on him to bring him up in here. So right then they figured you guilty. You never stood a chance. You never stood a chance because the unfairness in the courtroom. And they say justice is blind. They use that as an excuse. Justice not blind. The people that's in charge of enforcing justice is blind.

[00:19:59] **Amanda Rivkin** So you were convicted and sent?

[00:20:01] **Marvin Reeves** I was convicted and sentenced to five natural lives.

[00:20:06] **Amanda Rivkin** And served 18 years?

[00:20:07] **Marvin Reeves** 21.

[00:20:08] **Amanda Rivkin** 21 years.

[00:20:09] **Marvin Reeves** You know, and then I always questioned, why five natural lives because I understand there was five victims. You serve five natural lives as if you're going to die and come back. If you die and come back, you will still be in jail, you know. And that was my understanding of that. And I never did understand why they put Mr. Kitchin on death row. Can you imagine had they executed this guy? How do you get that back after you took a life? You can't get it back. You know, and I'm almost for certain they done took many lives of innocent guys that were called up in Jon Burge and his cronies corruption. And they done took these guys. You can't bring that back. Cause they say the man did this for 30 years. Nobody never challenged him. That says something about us as a society.

[00:21:05] **Amanda Rivkin** So you were 28 when you were sent to jail? Correct? And had no previous convictions? What was jail like?

[00:21:13] **Marvin Reeves** Well I ain't gonna say that. I've always been a borderline guy. Misdemeanor. Driving with no license. I mean, I never caused anybody harm. Never carried pistols. Never did drugs. Never sold drugs. You know, it was always, you know, I drove with no license. Police stop you, give you a ticket. I mean, they knew me so well in

the neighborhood, when they want to take somebody to jail, oh, there go Marvin, go get him, he ain't got no license. He keep a hundred dollars in his pocket though. Cause that was the bond on it, you know, it was a misdemeanor. Hundred dollars. Go to court, judge fine you \$250. Put another \$150 with that, it's done, you know. But that's not the right way to do things. The right way to do thing is go out there and get your license, get you some insurance so you can be legit out there. And that's what I do today. I mean, it's one of them things after serving 21 years in prison, my life has been altered for the rest of my life.

[00:22:15] **Amanda Rivkin** Tell me about the prison time. What that experience was like for you, your first experience with it?

[00:22:22] **Marvin Reeves** Well, it's one of the most cruelest places on the face of the Earth. Because... Again, the people that's there that's entrusted to keep you, they more or less likely have problems with theyself. See, you learn in life, you can't give everybody position of authority. Everybody can't handle authority. And I once read a book one time. The book is called Nile Valley: Black People's Contribution to Civilization. And in reading it, I came across a piece that said, people in power. Because we always want to know why do people in power eventually abuse the people that they entrusted to keep?

[00:23:23] **Marvin Reeves** That's that position of authority that a lot of people can't handle. That wind up getting, like Jon Burge, position of authority. You were the commander, on top of your game with the Chicago police force. And you took that badge of honor and you tarnished it by doing what you did. You and your cronies came to Latino and Black neighborhoods, and got guys, and took them to them stations, and tortured them, and made them sign a confession, and send them to jail. You got a lot of mothers fighting right to this day, like my mother did for 21 years, to get they child out of jail. Some that Jon Burge and his cronies created. And Chicago don't know what to do about it.

[00:24:12] **Marvin Reeves** It's terrible to send a man through that type of trial and tragedy for 21 years. See, in prison, you got to understand, you're not an animal when you go. But in order to survive, an animal you must become. Because either you're going to be one or two things, you gone be the prey or you gone get preyed upon. The choice is yours. So therefore, you go in not intending to be a victim, so you're go in there, you join gangs, you get abused by the gangs. You get abused by the police that's there and entrusted to keep. So therefore, with all that going on, how can you win? You come out of prison, you

almost a mad man. A lot of these guys come out of jail, they family gone, they don't know where they family at.

[00:25:23] **Marvin Reeves** The city of Chicago have nothing for you. You think when we got out of jail, they'd have rolled out the red carpet for us. None of that. You got to get out here and make tracks in society, like you did in prison in order to survive. You know, I'd have thought they'd have gave us one of these lifetime government jobs where we can take of ourself the rest of our life. S***. No no. Even though you file a lawsuit and you win and you get this little money, let me tell you something. They know you didn't make that money. So chances are they know you're not going to be able to keep it. You can have 10 million dollars and make the wrong turn, you back in the poor house where you started from. And that's the way society is.

[00:26:23] **Marvin Reeves** These just things that they know. Where they study dishing out the taxpayers money to the wrongfully convicted people. You don't have no type of medical, you don't have no type of insurance, you know. Lot of these guys don't have nowhere to go. Shelters full. They wind up Lower Wacker Drive in boxes. Steady screaming out for help. In the city that caused them to be in the position that they in don't even try to help them. Look, I done seen a lot of people go from society to prison, from prison to the nut house. That's how bad it is. I just happened to be fortunate and blessed to have the type of family I got.

[00:27:13] **Amanda Rivkin** It sounds like you had a very, if I may, a very clear mind throughout.

[00:27:18] **Marvin Reeves** Yeah. My family kept my structure together. Some a lot of these guys don't have. My mother always came to see me, told me it's going to be all right. She always put money on my book. My sister drove religiously to the prisons. They call it the mercy visit. Time to make that mercy visit. Because he belongs to us and if we don't care about him, ain't nobody else gonna care about him.

[00:27:45] **Amanda Rivkin** Which prisons were you in?

[00:27:46] **Marvin Reeves** In Pontiac. Menard. And Stateville. See, with that kind of time, they very rarely let you go to a medium camp. And see it didn't make it no better because the state's attorney wrote a letter to the prison that I didn't know that they had wrote until somebody pulled my file from me. They wrote a letter to the prison letting the prison know that I was never to receive no type of special privilege. I was never to

receive no favors. That I was a very aggressive murdering person. And the police should be very careful when interacting with me.

[00:28:40] **Amanda Rivkin** But it sounds like any previous criminal issues you might have had, none of them were violent.

[00:28:47] **Marvin Reeves** No.

[00:28:48] **Amanda Rivkin** So you're, I mean, you're not a violent person and you're suddenly in a maximum security prison. You mentioned abuse. What kind of abuse?

[00:28:58] **Marvin Reeves** And then when I found out about the letter because I'm trying to figure out why is the administration treating me different from other inmates. And I find out this is why. The state's attorney sent this letter down here and scared them people half to death of me.

[00:29:15] **Amanda Rivkin** Did the letter do you any favors with the other inmates?

[00:29:18] **Marvin Reeves** No. For a while I was contained for a couple of years by myself.

[00:29:23] **Amanda Rivkin** You were in solitary?

[00:29:24] **Marvin Reeves** Yeah. Until one superintended had the gumption to challenge that. He said this guy harmless as a fly. He ain't gonna hurt nobody. And once he did that, they let me out and they see: harmless. And I started pleading my case: I'm locked up for a crime I didn't do. And over the years, it was proved because my interactions with everybody, my interaction with the administration, you know, they didn't have no problem with me.

[00:30:09] **Amanda Rivkin** When you said abuse in prison, what sort of abuse did you experience?

[00:30:13] **Marvin Reeves** Well, I see a lot of guys, you know, get jumped on by the police. I've seen a lot of guys get shipped from one institution to another. They make sure that, you know, Stateville is closer to Chicago. So they make sure you in one of them penitentiary where your family can't really come see. You had to almost be on vacation. You had to almost be on vacation to get to these penitentiary, they so far.

[00:30:43] **Amanda Rivkin** Yeah.

[00:30:44] **Marvin Reeves** You know, so, you know, it's one of them things where you lose sense of who you are being in a 9 by 5. And see, the max joints, they stay in lockdown. So you might be in that cell six months to a year at a time. Because I remember when I was down at Mendar. They were on lockdown for actually 11 months and a week. So we was only off lockdown for twenty six days that whole year. And I mean, that's that that's how prison is, because they hold one person accountable for everybody. So he go out there and do something, they lock the whole institution down.

[00:31:37] **Marvin Reeves** So therefore, a lot of things you have to deal with that you wouldn't deal with because number one, you're not singled out, you're a category with everybody that's there. All of y'all crooks, ain't none of y'all no good. So what go for one go for the rest of y'all. And that keeps up the maligning within the institution. Because, now the other inmates is mad with you because you got to doing them lockdown. Now his wife can't come see him, he mad with you. His kids can't come to see him, he mad with you. Before you know it, you out there in the yard in an all-out brawl with these guys that mad with you because they didn't punish you by yourself. When you did something, they punished everybody. What kind of life is that to live? What kind of life? Believe me, I'm very sympathetic to those guys that's wrongfully locked up because they life has been changed for the rest of they life, and they'll never be the same. Never be the same.

[00:32:38] **Marvin Reeves** You know, and I really don't like talking about it because it hit home. I can't hardly think straight when I think about what was done to me. You know, with no answer. I used to go round and go to these college and, you know, telling my story and people be shocked. They like, did that really happen? Yeah, it really happened. And I tell people all the time, we as a country, we kick off wars in other countries. What happened here in Chicago? We don't allow that to happen nowhere, but at home in our backyard to where we, hush hush, don't talk about it. What do you mean not talk about it?

[00:33:35] **Marvin Reeves** These things happen. We need solutions to these problems and that's part of the problem. Everybody want to sweep it under the rug. Because it don't concern them. It wasn't none of they loved ones. How can you sweep something like this under? It's not gonna go away.

[00:33:52] **Amanda Rivkin** No.

[00:33:54] **Marvin Reeves** I mean, I see a lot of these guys... It's like... The world done collided on them, and they try so hard to keep theyself together. To where you can see them falling apart on a daily basis. And a lot of them, the problem is finance. You know, you do 30 years in jail and you get out, you ain't got hot water to cry with. Nobody gone help you. Many times I've been looking for jobs. You know what people tell me? I would like to help you, but I can't. Because, you know what? The first time one of these guys say something you don't like and ya'll get into a discrepancy, I'm going to court, I'm getting sued. I can't afford that to happen.

[00:34:48] **Marvin Reeves** These people have to protect they job. So in order to protect they job, they can't hire you. Who know when you gonna have one them penitentiary mental breakdowns. They can't afford that. So they push you back out and you got to seek [indiscernible] from the government.

[00:35:09] **Amanda Rivkin** Let's talk about coming out of jail a bit. What was your first steps out like? What was it like meeting the people that fought, you know, to get you out? Seeing your mother again?

[00:35:20] **Marvin Reeves** I mean, when I got out of jail, it was a... It was like a breath of fresh air. You know, it was more or less... Felt like I was a slave being free. Because I looked at it that this is the first day of the rest of my life. And, you know, one of the state's attorneys made a comment when the judge was releasing us.

[00:36:16] **Marvin Reeves** Because we didn't know that we were being released. Our lawyers kind of kept it a secret until we got to the County. And when we got to the County, the judge told the sheriff to take us in the back and take them handcuffs off us. That was kind of strange because they don't normally do that. And when the judge told them, say they won't be leaving out the back door today, they be going out the front door. One of the prosecutors say, well, I give them six months, they'll be back. I been home for six years. With no intention of going back.

[00:37:05] **Marvin Reeves** You know, it's under that same stereotype that trouble is easy to get into and hard to get out of and a lot of people might say, like I hear my kids say all the time, well pop you were just at the wrong place at the wrong time. Impossible.

[00:37:22] **Amanda Rivkin** You were at home in your bed.

[00:37:23] **Marvin Reeves** At home in my bed. You know, it's not my fault this guy committed a crime, wind up going to jail and didn't want to do his time. He called the people and told them that we committed this crime. They lock us up and they let him go. It's not supposed to happen like that. That was too easy. You know, it's not supposed to happen like that. And I think to some degree they knew he was lying but they didn't care. Because they had already started the ball rolling.

[00:37:59] **Marvin Reeves** In society, from what they see, they done lost a lot of respect for the Chicago police and the Chicago police force. In my days, you would never draw arms against an officer. If you got caught, you got caught. You went to jail and do your time. You never draw arms against an officer. That was a rule of life, to respect the man in Blue. Now, because he tarnished his self, you can not hinder society for what y'all did. You've got to try to correct it yourself. In my days, they had an Officer Friend that walked the neighborhood, knew everybody's parents, knew all the kids, because he made it his business. It was his job to know. Those days are gone. Because why? They don't really care.

[00:39:09] **Amanda Rivkin** But as far as the experience of coming back into society, I mean, where did you go first? Did you go to your sisters, your mothers? What was... just to come back to your initial days out.

[00:39:17] **Marvin Reeves** I actually, you know, like I say, my sisters has been very instrumental. And we're a family that come from the south.

[00:39:30] **Amanda Rivkin** Whereabout?

[00:39:32] **Marvin Reeves** Memphis, Tennessee.

[00:39:33] **Amanda Rivkin** [CUT] Yeah, it's interesting. You got family.

[00:39:34] **Marvin Reeves** Yeah, and we always believe in taking care of our own. We don't leave it up to nobody else to take care our responsibility. That's our family member. People from the South think like that. And that's what we do. So it really wasn't no hard choice that my sisters [indiscernible]. Like my sister Dina, she had a brand new truck. Hardly drove it. She gave it to me so I'd be able to get around. Because I'm paranoid. I don't want to be in the street. I don't want to be on the bus. I can't be around a crowd of people.

[00:40:12] **Marvin Reeves** I was on the bus downtown one day. I had went to the Daley Center. And I said, well, I'mma take the bus. And I got on the bus at Washington. And when I got on the bus at Washington, somewhere between Washington and Roosevelt, a commotion started on the bus. So, you know, who was the first one to get off?

[00:40:36] **Amanda Rivkin** You?

[00:40:37] **Marvin Reeves** Me. And I walked all the way home. Because of that experience. I don't want the police to come on the bus and falsely accuse me of something that I didn't do. So the first thing come to mind, exit the bus and don't get back on it. And I didn't. And it feel good walking from Roosevelt all the way down here to 47th St. You know, it remind me of back in the days when I used to walk all the time.

[00:41:10] **Amanda Rivkin** And you could walk it.

[00:41:11] **Marvin Reeves** Yeah, yeah, I do a lot of walking. Kind of help clear my mind from being walking in circle on the yard. Because when you on the yard, you just walk around in circles. So it clear, my mind from being on that circle when I be walking. See a lot of things in prison, takes the mental toll on you. And a lot of people know, you come home, they don't have no psychiatrist for you. These guys need mental health. And a lot of them, they just, you know, figure well, hey, they'll commit more crime to go back to jail because I can't get help out here. And that's not the solution. That's not the answer to the problem. You know, our government needs to step up to the plate. You know, and basically take the initiative to realize this wrong was done. So you've got to understand. Giving them that money like they spent over, over a hundred million dollars.

[00:42:14] **Amanda Rivkin** You got a big chunk too?

[00:42:16] **Marvin Reeves** It don't mean nothing. Let me tell you something, I'd give it all back to them today. To take me out that police station and take me home to my family. I'd give it all back. It don't mean nothing. See, you're looking at a guy that done worked all his life. I get a piece of mind being able to take care of my kids. Things of the world, I don't really care about. Fancy cars, you know, luxury home. Look, I sleep in a small space and I'm comfortable. I don't got no [indiscernible] car, I got an old truck out there. And I'm comfortable. I don't have no problem with the police. Cause they know I'm not no drug dealer, because I ain't not walking around with these fancy car and all this jewelry on. And I always commend them for doing they job because they job is extremely hard. I got police members in my family.

[00:43:20] **Marvin Reeves** You know, job extremely hard, especially the way the streets is today, with no respect for the man in blue. Hard job. I wouldn't take it for nothing in the world. You know, I'd rather get a job being a garbage man. I'd rather get a job selling papers on the corner, making people happy, you know. Because the world is already sad. Why do you need a job to depress people? It's no good. The world supposed to smile. And it's hard for the world to smile with all the tragedy in the world.

[00:44:01] **Amanda Rivkin** Has being able to tell your story to different people and different groups given you some measure of comfort and some solace?

[00:44:07] **Marvin Reeves** Yeah. You know, I mean, just like I travel around to a lot of the universities and speaking to the majority of the students that the students in law school and the students undergrads and things like that. And I remember when I was in New York. And I was sitting on a panel with an ex-prosecutor. And ex-attorney which was a teacher. And we was talking to a class of prosecutors. Guys, that's going to work for the state's. And I just explained to them my story and how I feel about the situation. We was down there with those guys, the Central Park. Those guys that was locked up for such a jogger.

[00:45:10] **Marvin Reeves** We was down there with them. And more or less, like I explained it to them, being a prosecutor, you got to be the type of person that could cut your momma's head off and go in the room and lay down. And the reason why I say that, because any time you can send an innocent man to prison, you go home and go to sleep, ain't no telling what you will do. Ain't no telling what you'll do. And being a prosecutor, that's the way you got to think. Because I always asked myself a question. I'm like, well, if they know you're innocent, why do they prosecute you? Is it because they don't care? No, it's because they've got a job to do. If you're a prosecutor and you smell a rat in this case, you should be able to go to your boss and say, look, boss, this not right, this not right, and this not right. They can't do that. They got to figure out a way how to prosecute that case. Any means necessary. They got to figure out a way to prosecute their case.

[00:46:20] **Marvin Reeves** So now, if you innocent and they find you guilty, you've got to figure out a way to come back. Not me. But that's not what the law say. And you go look it up, People vs. Cole, they say any information that is for the defendant or against the defendant should be presented in the court of law. In my terminology of that, saying that if you find out that I'm innocent of this crime, just like you initially prosecute me, you

supposed to fight diligently to free me. That's your job. Your job is not to send me to jail and you know I'm an innocent man. This case stunk from the beginning. They didn't care about the stench though. They didn't care. I.

[00:47:20] **Amanda Rivkin** What's been the hardest thing for you through all this? Different things at different times?

[00:47:26] **Marvin Reeves** The hardest thing for me is them not acknowledging and accepting the fact. Because if they did, they figure out some way to change. That makes me feel like they don't care. You know, we give you this money, like I said, it don't mean nothing. It don't mean nothing. I get a peace in myself knowing I haven't did anything, I didn't did nothing wrong and my family back me up, cause they hung with me the whole 21 years. They know I didn't did nothing wrong. Cause that's not my MO. You're talking about a guy that would take his hard-earned money and stop the ice cream truck on the block and buy all the kids ice cream because they parents couldn't afford it. You're not going to go nowhere and kill no kids. For what?

[00:48:29] **Marvin Reeves** That's the hardest part of this case. You accused me of something that I'm totally against. Understand, I was raised by my momma and my sisters. So therefore, I got a love in my heart for women and children can not do no wrong. So when you accuse me of this crime, you hurt my heart. Cause that's something I will not tolerate. And that's the way I was raised. That's the way I was raised.

[00:49:05] **Amanda Rivkin** So you got a large settlement and you spent most of it on your family?

[00:49:10] **Marvin Reeves** Yeah. I basically, you know, took the money and passed it off to my family. Bought my sister a new truck. Bought my momma a house. Bought my daddy a house. I got a few properties. Let my son move in one. Let my daughter move in the other one. You know. I mean, like I said, don't really mean nothing. You know, money is only good to those who lust for it and is greedy for it, you know. A wise man once said you could take a rich man and make him poor, chances are he'll kill his self. Take a poor man, make him rich and make him poor again, he won't miss a beat. He'll keep on going as though he never had it.