

2xyw

November 7, 2012

Dear Tina:

I have been praying for you since I first heard from you.

Thank you for your comments. I would love to take you up on your offer - with the added provision that if I pass a lie-detector test as well then I would be released from prison. All a lie-detector can detect is whether you believe you are telling the truth. Obviously, we both believe what we are saying.

I also apologize for calling you a liar. It was a provocative thing to say and implies that you intentionally misstated the facts. Initially, I thought you did. After hearing from you now, I don't believe you intentionally misstated what happened. Like I said before, you don't have to take my word for any of this. Go read the court file (State v Richards, 84 CF 344) and the police statements (the Dane County Sheriff has them). I based my comments on the police reports versus the trial testimony. If you didn't get it from your mom and Ron, where did it come from?

The most interesting thing about your mom's statements to the police is that they did not match Ron's version of events. She told the truth to the police. But the police staged a "reinactment" and after that your mom's testimony changed to include Ron passing her as he went down the hallway. Without this crucial fabrication Ron's lies were completely unbelievable and I would have been acquitted. And yes, I am sure your mom intentionally lied. I would speculate that if she had not cooperated with the prosecutor that they would have taken you and your brother away from her and put you in foster care. But that is just speculation on my part. Maybe she lied out of a sense of loyalty to Ron. It's no surprise that she no longer remembers what she did. If my lie sent an innocent man to prison for life I would want to suppress it as well.

Yes, I do remember glancing over my shoulder and seeing you - right after I broke Dick's grip on my jacket so I could straighten up. What you saw was the end of the fight when Dick finally received so many wounds he could no longer continue his attack. But he still kept his grip on me and as he fell backward he pulled me down with him. Just as I broke Dick's grip and straightened up, Terry opened his door and cast some light into the darkened hallway. I turned toward Terry and stepped over

Dick on my way out of the hallway. Terry shut his door while my foot was still in the air. Yet at the trial he testified that I stomped on Dick's chest and blood shot 3 feet in the air. Not only was this medically impossible, the evidence didn't support it (and it wasn't included in any of his statements to the police). Note there was no bloody footprint which there would have been if it happened like Terry testified. But that's a minor matter.

As for how the fight started, no one saw it. Ron had his back to us, Shirley was out of sight in the dining room and Lyle was backed into a corner of the kitchen, blocked by Ron. Dick sucker-punched me, knocked me back into the hallway and pinned me against the linen closet doors. He held me with one hand so he could batter me with the other hand.

Size sometimes doesn't make a difference - when there's a smaller person who's more vicious or capable. In this case, I've had a crippled leg since I was in a motorcycle accident at age 18. An 85 pound difference in weight is a large advantage against a cripple - and it doesn't take into consideration the brutal, vicious nature of Dick. He was probably the most violent, dangerous person who ever walked the streets of Madison. You should talk to people who knew him - other than his family and friends. Everybody feared him.

It's not a matter of a few police reports - there was a stack of reports a foot thick. There are numerous instances where he attacked people without provocation (just like he did to me) and beat them senseless. There was also at least one report where he raped a woman he knew after pushing his way into her home and she refused to press charges against him for fear of what he would do to her if she did.

Ron lied about what happened - how the fight started, how it ended, everything. That comment about "wanna play with knives" is a complete fabrication on Ron's part. The only conversation between Ron and me is when I staggered out of the hallway (still dazed from Dick's beating) and Ron was standing in the living room with a knife. I told him to "back off". As he was backing up and we circled, Dick came around the corner screaming and when Ron looked over at him I ran for the door. When I got outside I collapsed on the grass - my legs gave out on me. The only way you could have heard that "wanna play with knives" crap was by hearing Ron retelling his version of events because the only place it ever occurred was in his own mind.

I urge you to go read the court records and the police reports. Most of all, read my post-conviction papers and see what an idiot I was. Even with all the bogus testimony I would never have been convicted of murder if I had not followed my attorney's advice.

But let me digress for a bit and tell you about my brother since you still seem to subscribe to the homicidal maniac theory of my guilt. He abused, terrorized and tormented me throughout my entire childhood. When I was 17, he attacked me and I locked myself into a bathroom to get away from him. He broke down the door, I stabbed him, got away and called an ambulance. My parents were there when it happened. We all gave statements and the district attorney ruled it was self-defense.

He left me alone after that - until I was crippled in a motorcycle accident in 1972. Then he started stalking me, terrorizing me again because he knew I couldn't defend myself against him now that I was crippled. In 1973, when I still had a cast on my leg, he went bersek at an apartment where I was staying and I shot him. There were people jumping out of windows and hiding in closets to get away from him. I was convicted of manslaughter (which is self-defense using too much force) and served 4 years. I was released in 1977 and stayed out for 7 years with no problems.

When Dick attacked me and I stabbed him, I didn't know how badly he was hurt. It wasn't until the next day that I found out he was dead. I contacted the same attorney I had in 1973, told him exactly what happened and hired him to represent me. I turned myself in knowing I was going to face murder charges but also knowing I was the victim of an unprovoked attack and acted in self-defense. I was out on bail for 6 months (until the trial). The prosecutor filed a speedy trial motion after Ron set up a woman to be brutally raped by Steve Gerrard - a serial rapist he had living in his basement (where the hours-long ordeal occurred).

Ron wanted me to snap to get my bail revoked so he set up a bartender at Off the Wagon to be raped because he thought she was my girlfriend (he got the wrong woman). The prosecutor covered up Ron's involvement in the rape and knew she had to get the trial completed before Ron did something else. Read the Dane County court file: State v Gerrard, 84 CF ____.

I had the same attorney in 1973 and 1984. I trusted him completely. When he told me that my prior manslaughter conviction would be brought out at the trial and I would get convicted if I asserted that I was acting in self-defense, I believed him (I found later it wasn't true). He persuaded me to go along with a fabricated version of events that shifted the blame to Lyle. I agreed because I knew I was innocent and as long as I got acquitted I didn't care how it happened.

He told me to make sure Lyle didn't come to the trial and proceeded to create an entire defense revolving around a pool of blood on the sidewalk outside the apartment. It all depended on the origin of the pool of blood not being revealed until after the prosecution rested its case. Well, somebody tipped off the prosecutor so one of her last witnesses was a paramedic who testified to where the blood came from.

That ruined the fabricated defense and I ended up telling what really happened. But Lyle was not at the trial. All the prosecutor had to say was "if Richards was telling the truth wouldn't his cousin be here to testify?" Well, of course he would! So the jury chose to believe Ron's lies. But even with that, if the judge hadn't changed the jury instructions to invalidate my self-defense claim by incorporating the fictitious shove I would not have been convicted of murder. I didn't know what was going on that night. That's why I introduced myself and offered to shake hands with Dick. What kind of a moron would shove a guy he didn't know for no reason when the guy is so much larger than him?

I exposed what my attorney had planned and sought a new trial. My father, Lyle, Lyle's attorney, another witness and I all testified to what my attorney did. My attorney and his partner denied it and placed the blame on me. The judge held all of us were lying and the two attorneys were telling the truth.

It was my own stupidity in trusting my attorney and not having any scruples about how I got the outcome I wanted that put me in prison just as much as the testimony at the trial. I should have known better. I should have heard alarm bells going off in my head when my attorney came up with his cockamamie scheme. But I didn't. I was too smart for my own good. I thought that tricking the court was what attorneys did and if my attorney said this is what we should do, then I went along with it.

Once again, let me tell you I am sorry for all the suffering you and your family endured as a result of what happened. I had no idea how hard it was for you. I cannot undo what has happened but I can make sure I never harm another person and I can devote my life to helping others when and where I can.

That is why I suggested core transformation to you: to help you get beyond the trauma you experienced as a child. Believe me, it works. I was able to heal from the years of abuse I endured as a child. I want the same healing for you so you can go forward and live your life in peace and happiness.

It would be my preference that you read the police records and court transcripts so you can see the difference between what you remember and what really happened. You have lived the last 28 years with false memories about that night (you couldn't even remember how old you were or what year it happened). Don't take my word for it, read the court and police records. I think finding out what really happened will cast the events of that night in a different light and help you move on with your life.

However, if given a choice between seeing you do the core transformation so you can heal yourself; or reading old court files; I'd rather see you healed and whole even if you still think I'm an unrepentant murderer rather than to see you stay traumatized while learning that I've been wrongly imprisoned for the last 28 years.

The choice is yours. May God guide you in this matter.