

1 VGV #89 Kim Motley 8/1/2022

2 D: Thank you. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself? What is your age?

3 K: Okay, well I am in my 40s and I am an international attorney. I am a Native of Milwaukee. I  
4 went to Whitefish Bay high school's chapter 220 program, and I grew up in [Fairfield  
5 neighborhood], [Fairfield neighborhood] housing projects.

6 D: Wow. And an international attorney. I'm scared of you.

7 K: Yes (laughs)

8 D: (laughs) What is your race?

9 K: I am African American and also Korean.

10 D: And what is your gender?

11 K: I am female.

12 D: And what neighborhood area of Milwaukee do you live now?

13 K: I don't live in Milwaukee so, but I grew up on the Northside. Now I live out of state.

14 D: Okay. And do you remember where your story happened?

15 K: The story regarding Claude getting shot?

16 D: Yes.

17 K: Well basically when that happened, I was actually in Afghanistan.

18 D: Wow.

19 K: Part of my international work I've been working in Afghanistan now going on 14 years, and I  
20 have a law firm, or I had a law firm that was in Afghanistan. So I was there when I found out  
21 what happened.

22 D: And do you know the general neighborhood of where you heard that this happened?

23 K: I knew it was around [Capitol Heights neighborhood] where this happened at, in the  
24 neighborhood Claude was dropping off Scott, who was living around there at the time, and so  
25 that's where it happened.

26 D: Wow. And can you tell me a little bit of what you know about the people who were involved?  
27 Their age, race, and gender?

28 K: Right. So, I understand that Nathan at the time, I think he was 16, and he's an African  
29 American young man, and he was in a car with other people that are Black, and I believe he was  
30 the youngest. I think there were three or four other people in the car, but they were 18 years and  
31 above from what I understand.

32 D: Okay. And the young man, he ended up shooting who?

33 K: He ended up shooting Claude, my husband, in the face and so he did that while Claude was  
34 actually pulling out, was actually leaving or trying to leave anyway. Well, he did leave. So that's  
35 where he shot him. Through the window.

36 D: How would you say this experience affected you?

37 K: Well, my role in this experience was also representing Claude who was shot as a victim. As  
38 an attorney, I was representing him and also representing Victoria as her attorney as well. And  
39 so, the interesting thing is that when this happened we had, we've moved from Wisconsin in

40 Milwaukee in 2008. And so, this happened in 2014. So, we had been away for a number of years.  
41 And this incident, and I had stopped doing cases here completely and I was doing most of my  
42 work overseas. And I still do a lot of work overseas. And so this situation in representing them it  
43 kind of brought me back home a little bit, and it started me taking more cases here.

44 D: Wow. How would you say this affected your family?

45 K: Well, I mean it was definitely very scary for everyone. We have two daughters and a son.  
46 And again like I said we were, he was visiting here and so it sort of confirmed frankly why we  
47 left in the first place. Because you know it wasn't an easy move for us to move from Milwaukee  
48 to Charlotte, North Carolina. All of our family is basically in Wisconsin at that point in time. I  
49 mean, we have family friends and stuff elsewhere as well, but most of our family is here. And so,  
50 I think it made us look at Milwaukee. You know, Claude and I grew up in Milwaukee, so we  
51 understand the violence. We understand a lot of the issues here. But our kids, you know when  
52 you have kids you try to shield them from that, and I think that helps, unfortunately, open their  
53 eyes to some of the issues in Milwaukee.

54 D: Wow. How would you say it affected your community?

55 K: Well, I mean I think Claude is not, you know, usually because I, when I, before I left, I was  
56 working the public defender's office. So, I was working as a criminal defense attorney, and I  
57 think the school of thought is normally people that get shot or involved in shootings are involved  
58 in illegal activity, you know? And he wasn't obviously. He was just here visiting. And so, I think  
59 that was a shock to a lot of people that it happened to him, and I think it also helped bring the  
60 community closer together because it was just so personal I think for a lot of people. So, I  
61 thought that was really interesting. And it's like, I've worked in the criminal justice system for a

62 number of years as an attorney, but I wasn't really as intimately involved in it until this really  
63 made me become a lot more involved in it on a more personal level.

64 D: How do you think this situation could have been avoided?

65 K: Well, I mean I think it's ridiculous, the violence in Milwaukee. I think I always say this I  
66 think Milwaukee in particular it really doesn't do the young people justice. It's like there, I don't  
67 see a lot of avenues that young people, especially in the community, to really go to if you don't  
68 have a lot of money or of a lot of means. And I think that you go to the malls you have to be a  
69 certain age to have an adult. You go to the lakefront you have, there's a curfew, and police are  
70 stopping you. So, there's not a lot of avenues for young people to really be able to do stuff in the  
71 community and unfortunately, they get bored and they get involved in activities that they  
72 shouldn't get involved in a lot of times. So, I think that's a big problem.

73 D: Idle hands, huh?

74 K: Yes. And also, you got it in Milwaukee that the older people are scared of the young people,  
75 that's not good.

76 D: I know.

77 K: There's no real community community. Like you know it used to be back in the day. People  
78 would watch out for kids and make sure that they're fine and everybody was kind of like  
79 watching each other's kids. It doesn't really happen like that anymore, unfortunately.

80 D: Was the perpetrator caught? Who shot Claude.

81 K: Yes, Nathan was caught.

82 D: What could we do to eliminate or lower gun violence?

83 K: Well, I mean definitely more gun restrictions I think is important. I think it's ridiculous the  
84 amount of guns that are available in this country. We have more guns than people at this point. I  
85 think that there needs to be more guardrails on gun control.

86 [...]

87 D: Do you have anything you'd like to say to the elected officials?

88 K: You know it's you know I think there needs to be more guardrails on gun control like smart  
89 gun legislation is definitely necessary, but also there needs to be more sort of more things like  
90 kids can do especially in the summer. When I say kids, I literally mean 18 and under. There  
91 needs to be more avenues for youth to do stuff, particularly people on the Northside and kids of  
92 color. I think the police needs to be more community policing, it can't be "Us versus Them"  
93 mentality. I think that's a big problem too, where police look at everyone in a lot of  
94 neighborhoods as all criminals and just as opposed to trying to really mentor some of the young  
95 people. I think there definitely needs to be more community interaction with that, so. I don't  
96 know. It's a lot of things that the legislatures could do here for sure.

97 D: What would you say to our community?

98 K: I think I've traveled all over the world, and I've been pretty much on every continent. And I  
99 think one thing that a lot of Milwaukeeans don't realize, especially people of color in  
100 Milwaukee, just how amazing they are to the world. There's a lot of talent here. There's a lot of  
101 intellect here. There's a lot of creativity here that I don't see in pretty much anywhere, and I wish  
102 people would understand the value that they have if they're willing to give it to the world. And I  
103 think traveling is important for people to do just in general, the community. It helps educate you.  
104 It helps you appreciate things I think a little bit better, at least for me. And I think that's really

105 important for people to try to understand their value and just understand they have, there is  
106 something very special about Black people and people of color in Milwaukee that I wish they  
107 would realize and see. And you can't really understand that I think until you travel.

108 D: That's beautiful (laughs)

109 K: (laughs) That was so nice.

110 D: And do you have anything you want to add?

111 K: No, I think it's good, yeah. Thank you.

112 D: Thank you for sharing. (laughs)

113 K: Yeah, no problem (laughs) You're so sweet.

114 D: That was beautiful.

115 K: Thank you.