

# Is Crime Down? It Doesn't Feel That Way on the Streets

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I recently heard the crime rate is down in the the East Bay city of Oakland. It doesn't feel that way on the streets. My 21-year-old brother who stays in Oakland just got shot at last week. I stay in Hunter's Point, and someone in the neighborhood just got shot at yesterday.

The last few weeks haven't been good for me. I made the local news twice because of violence.

On March 22, I was standing at the T-stop on 3rd Street in San Francisco when some young dudes choked a 57-year-old Asian lady and threw her off the platform. Her mouth was bleeding. It was shady for them to attack an old lady. The cold part was when my cousin called me the next day to say she saw me on the news. I got interviewed because I was standing right there when the assault occurred. I was at the wrong spot at the wrong time. It was bad because first off, I got on the news for an old lady being thrown off the platform, and there's nothing good about that. It was also bad because they asked me all these questions on camera that I didn't have answers to.

The second time I made the news was even worse. It was because I was getting shot at on the freeway last Sunday. Me and three other people left the city around midnight, trying to get to Hayward to see some females. I was driving.

We were in San Leandro when we happened to pass a car. We looked at the people in the car, and my friend said, "What's up?" in a head motion, and we thought everything was fine. The car slowed down a little, moved to the other side of me, and that's when my cousin mugged them. Since I was driving, I didn't even know my cousin mugged them. I smack past their car, but I guess they thought we were on them. I heard the first gunshot hit my window, and the bullet ended up hitting my cousin in the back. He was damn near crying like he got shot hella times, but luckily the bullet just clipped him and popped out.

I was mad my cousin got shot, but then again, if he hadn't mugged those folks, none of this would have happened. He was the only one who got shot. I'm glad the bullet wasn't in his head because that would have been crazy.

While we were getting shot at, I managed to get off the freeway, but not before hitting the island that separates traffic. Then I hit the off-ramp and landed in the island. Everybody hopped out of the car and went different ways. I left my phone in the car, so I had to go back to get it. I got into my car and drove it around the corner to where everybody gathered waiting for me. It

was damn near 1 a.m. People started coming out of their houses to see what was going on. This one dude who we didn't even know gave us a tire. But when we turned around to fix our car, this white dude was trying to take a tire off my car.

Three different highway policemen kept coming back to ask us if we had seen anything. We all said, "no," because we knew for sure they were going to take the car since there were three bullets holes and my window was shot out. I wish they had let me drive off with my car, but because of the bullet holes, they had to take it.

The police handcuffed us all, even the guy who was just trying to help us put a new tire on the car. While being handcuffed, I told the guy who helped us, "I know you're not helping no more black people out." He started laughing and said, "I'm not helping nobody else out." I think they handcuffed us because we're black and they thought we had something in the car, which we didn't.

We were taken to the police station and asked hella questions. By the time it was all over, it was 4 a.m. It was lightweight shady because one of the people who rode in my car was only 17 years old, so he had to wait for his mom and dad to get him. I wasn't really trippin' about being at the police station because I knew they couldn't take me to jail for being shot at. I couldn't wait to leave and get home. It was hella late.

Since we didn't have a ride, my cousin called somebody he knew to pick us up. I had to take BART and get back to the city to see my parole officer at 10 that morning. Then I had to go straight to work even though I only got two hours of sleep. I was so tired I didn't even want to get up, but I made it to work.

They took my car, and now I'm real mad because I only had that car for one day. Now I'm back to the bus and I know not to hang with those people who got me mixed up with being shot at.

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