

Lil' Kim Drama

Written by Keith ID949

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Female rap artist Lil' Kim's one-time friends, members of the hip-hop band Junior M.A.F.I.A.; will become not so 'friendly' by testifying against the female rapper in her perjury trial, prosecutors said in opening arguments in Manhattan federal court yesterday.

It seems also the rival rapper Capone will also testify against Lil' Kim, prosecutors said.

Lil' Kim is on trial for lying about a shooting in front of HOT 97 radio on Feb. 25, 2001 that involved two close associates — Damion "Rock" Butler and Suif "Gutta" Jackson. Both Butler and Jackson have already pleaded guilty to their roles in the gunfight.

Other Junior M.A.F.I.A. members, rappers Antoine Spain (Banger) and James Lloyd (Lil' Cease) were at the radio station on Hudson Street when the shootout occurred, according to the indictment. They're expected to spill the beans.

The shooting occurred on the heels of bad blood between Lil' Kim's crew and the posse of rival female rapper Foxy Brown and the duo Capone-N-Noreaga.

Lil' Kim and sidekick Monique Dopwell are charged with perjury and obstruction of justice for allegedly lying about Butler and Jackson being at the scene of the crime, and claiming they did not know Jackson.

But other members of Lil' Kim's entourage "will tell you that Butler escorted them into the building [at HOT 97]," said U.S. Assistant Attorney Daniel Gitner.

And prosecutors said they have video footage, both inside the radio station and of the actual shooting in the street that shows both Butler and Jackson at the scene.

Gitner told jurors that the Junior M.A.F.I.A. members have criminal records and became

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"cooperating witnesses" in exchange for reduced prison time or dismissing of pending criminal charges.

Meanwhile, it's likely that Butler and Jackson, the former co-defendants who pleaded guilty, will also be compelled to testify by prosecutors.

Neither was considered a cooperator when copping pleas but one court insider involved in the case suspected that one of them might agree to sing in exchange for reduced prison time.

All in all, the first day appeared to be a disaster for Lil' Kim.

It started when Manhattan federal court Judge Gerard Lynch scolded her lawyer Mel Sachs because she was late to trial.

Then prosecutors submitted a mountain of physical evidence gathered by law enforcement, including photos showing the close personal and business relationship between Lil' Kim and the two shooters.

There were photos of Lil' Kim with Jackson, and the address that Jackson put on his tax return was actually the same as the rapper's residence in Englewood, N.J. Both appeared at her 2001 birthday party in Miami.

And then a member of Lil' Kim's business entourage, Jamel Jackson, tied the loose ends together at the end of the day. Jackson, a Brooklyn neighborhood friend of Kim and the late rapper Biggie Smalls, said he was an assistant manager for Roc Management, headed by Butler.

A nervous Jackson, his arms folded, was subpoenaed and not eager to testify. He said Butler co-managed Kim as an individual artist as well as the group Junior M.A.F.I.A. that included Kim, Lloyd, Spain and others.

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