

Lil' Kim Convicted

Written by Robert ID1016
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Female rap and hip-hop artist Lil' Kim was convicted Thursday of lying to a federal grand jury investigating a shooting outside a radio station. She was convicted of perjury and conspiracy but acquitted of obstruction of justice.

Prosecutors accused the 4-foot-11 Grammy winner of telling "preposterous" lies to a grand jury relying on her eyewitness testimony about the 2001 gunfight outside WQHT, the rap station known as Hot 97.

The shootout occurred on Feb. 25, 2001, when Lil' Kim's entourage crossed paths with a rival rap group, Capone-N-Noreaga. One man was injured as more than two dozen

Lil' Kim's assistant, Monique Dopwell, also was found guilty of perjury and conspiracy and acquitted of obstruction of justice.

Both defendants shook their heads as the verdicts were delivered. The rappers supporters broke out in sobs.

Sentencing was set for June 24. The defendants had faced up to 30 years in prison if convicted of all the charges.

Lil' Kim, 29, known for her revealing outfits and raunchy hip-hop raps, had testified that the gun battle reminded her of the slaying of her legendary mentor, Notorious B.I.G., and even the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

It was "a heartfelt day — like the day Biggie was killed and 9/11," she said.

"This was a very serious situation," she testified. "I could not come into a grand jury and purposely tell false statements and lie."

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Assistant U.S. Attorney Cathy Seibel told the Manhattan jurors that the 4-foot-11 Lil' Kim, referred to throughout the trial by her real name, Kimberly Jones, had repeatedly lied to them, just as she did to the grand jury.

"The testimony was preposterous. It was insulting. It was insulting to your intelligence. It was insulting to the judicial process," Seibel told jurors before they returned their verdict on perjury, obstruction of justice and conspiracy charges.

Seibel had belittled the defense that the sunglasses-laden Lil' Kim did not notice two people she knew at the scene of the shootout — her manager, Damion Butler, and a friend, Suif Jackson, both of whom have since pleaded guilty to gun charges.

"You would have to believe they were magic sunglasses that only block out your friends who were shooting people," Seibel said.

Lil' Kim defense lawyer Mel Sachs had argued that his client had no reason to protect Butler and Jackson because she had already eliminated them from her life.

When Lil' Kim was testifying, Seibel confronted her with evidence she owes nearly \$1 million in back taxes. The singer told jurors she leaves decisions about her finances to her manager and accountant.

Among witnesses at the trial were Antoine "Banger" Spain and James "Lil' Cease" Lloyd, Brooklyn rappers who once teamed with Lil' Kim in a group called Junior M.A.F.I.A. They testified they saw Butler and Jackson at the radio station with her.

The jury had been shown security photos taken at the station showing Butler opening a door for her and the pair outside together just moments before the shooting.

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Lil' Kim had testified that after the shooting she had a falling out with Butler, Banger and Cease because they were freeloading at her New Jersey town house. She said she decided to cut off Butler completely after he caused a ruckus outside a video shoot with Phil Collins (news), the basis of a defense argument that she had no incentive to lie for him.

"I was just fed up," she said. "They were taking advantage of me."

The rapper also testified at length about her modest background and mercurial career, which began with an impromptu audition with rapper Notorious B.I.G. on the street in their Brooklyn neighborhood. She described traveling the world to perform and promote her records.

Lil' Kim won a Grammy Award for her part in the hit remake of "Lady Marmalade" in 2001.

[Source](#)