

## **Curtis "Wall Street" Carroll**

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00:00:01,845 --> 00:00:12,645

I was 14 years old inside of a bowling alley, burglarizing an arcade game and upon exiting a building, a security guard grabbed my arm, so I ran.

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00:00:12,645 --> 00:00:15,645

I ran down the street and I jumped on top of a fence.

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00:00:15,645 --> 00:00:21,765

And when I got to the top, the weight of 3000 quarters in my book bag pulled me back down to the ground.

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00:00:21,765 --> 00:00:30,345

So, when I came to the security guard was standing over top of me and he said, "Next time you little punk steal something you can carry".

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00:00:30,345 --> 00:00:35,935

I was taken to juvenile hall. And when I was released into the custody of my mother,

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00:00:35,935 --> 00:00:41,185

the first words my uncle said was "How did you get caught?" I said, "Man, the bookbag was too heavy".

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00:00:41,185 --> 00:00:46,975

He said, "Man, you weren't supposed to take all the quarters." I said, "Man, they was small. What am I supposed to do"?

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00:00:46,975 --> 00:00:51,835

And 10 minutes later, he took me to burglarize another arcade game.

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00:00:51,835 --> 00:00:54,823

We need a gas money to get home.

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00:00:54,823 --> 00:01:02,953

Soon after, I committed my first crime and it was the first time that I was told that I had potential and felt like somebody believed in me.

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00:01:02,953 --> 00:01:08,173

Nobody ever told me that I could be a lawyer, doctor, or engineer. I mean, how was I supposed to do that?

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00:01:08,173 --> 00:01:13,396

I couldn't read, write, or spell. I was illiterate, so...

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00:01:13,396 --> 00:01:20,626

At 17 years old, I was arrested for robbery-murder. And I soon learned that finances in prison rule more than it did on the streets.

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00:01:20,626 --> 00:01:21,762

So, I wanted it in.

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00:01:21,762 --> 00:01:31,662

I was lost, tired and I was out of options. So at 20 years old, I did the hardest thing I'd ever done in my life.

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00:01:31,662 --> 00:01:38,852

I picked up a book! And it was the most agonizing time of my life.

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00:01:38,852 --> 00:01:45,792

Trying to learn how to read. The ostracizing from my family. The homies.

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00:01:45,792 --> 00:01:55,822

It was rough, man. It was a struggle. Well, little did I know I was receiving the greatest gifts I'd ever dreamed of - self-worth,

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00:01:55,822 --> 00:02:02,842

knowledge, discipline. I was so excited to be reading that I read everything I can get my hands on... candy wrappers,

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00:02:02,842 --> 00:02:10,852

clothing, logos, street signs, everything... I was just reading stuff, just reading stuff.

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00:02:10,852 --> 00:02:14,512

I was so excited to know how to read and know how to spell.

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00:02:14,512 --> 00:02:20,572

The homie came up and said, "Man, what you eating?? I said, "c-a-n-d-y, candy".

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00:02:20,572 --> 00:02:25,762

He said, "Let me get some." I said, n-o, no." It was awesome!!!

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00:02:25,762 --> 00:02:32,752

I mean, I can actually now for the first time in my life - READ - the feeling that I got from it was amazing.

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00:02:32,752 --> 00:02:38,092

And then at 22, feeling myself, feeling confident,

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00:02:38,092 --> 00:02:48,139

I remember what the OGE told me. So, I picked up the business section of the newspaper. I wanted to find these rich white folks.