

Only On 2: Wrongly-Accused Of Rape, Brian Banks' Life Becoming A Movie

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MEMPHIS (CBSLA) — Nearly five years ago CBS 2 News broke the Brian Banks story – a budding football star convicted and sent to prison for a rape he didn't commit.

Now, Hollywood has come calling.

CBS2's Randy Paige, who has interviewed Banks several times over those five years, went to Memphis where the Banks story is being filmed.

It's a story that is Only On 2.

Tom Shadyac is creating the movie, Banks his inspiration.

"Brian is a lump of coal that has been crushed into a diamond," said Shadyac.

Paige asks Banks if he's seeing his life being played out accurately?



(credit: CBS)

"Yes, I definitely do," Banks says, "It's a fight for freedom, it's a fight for innocence and it's a fight for justice and equal rights."

Banks, a former Long Beach High football standout dreamed of playing in the NFL. After being falsely accused of rape when he was just 16-years-old, he ended going prison instead of the

full ride football scholarship he was headed to at USC.

A decade later, his accuser confessed she made it all up.

Banks was exonerated in 2012. A year later his dream came true. He played in the NFL pre-season with the Atlanta Falcons.

Shadyac is making the Banks story in Memphis because, well, he's from here. His credits include "Patch Adams" and "Ace Ventura."

"He had a choice in prison to let those bars cage him in or to look inside and free himself and he looked inside and I think it's an offer now for all of us to look inside ourselves and free ourselves from whatever circumstances we are facing," Shadyac says.

Banks is played by actor Aldis Hodge. His credits include "Underground" and "Straight Outta Compton."

He says he jumped at the chance to play Brian's life story.

"We all believe in the story because we all believe in Brian," says Hodge.

"The most important thing for me as an actor is to capture as much of his authenticity as possible and put that on screen because I want to give the audience what I see. He really is just this ball of light," Hodge says.

Oscar-nominated actor Greg Kinnear is co-starring as Justin Brooks, the law professor who led the legal team that proved Brian's innocence.

"Justin's an extraordinary guy he's been great to have around here, it's weird, it's a little odd to have an actor to have the guy you're playing hanging out, not shy either, he'll give me a few tips every now and then. But he's a great guy and loves what he does, I'm touched to play a guy like this," Kinnear says.

Brooks co-founded the California Innocence Project nearly 20 years ago. He says Brian's story puts a human face on the tragedy of the wrongly-convicted.

"I felt for a long time that Brian was the voice for thousands of other people. Because he's so articulate, and so smart and can really tell his story, in a really compelling way. And there's a lot of guys who can't, who went through the same thing Brian did. There's a lot of guys who can't," Brooks says.

He says the movie depicts how people who are innocent can plead guilty when they are frightened and alone as Brian was when he was 17.

Paige asked the director what he hopes audiences come away with.

"I hope they're inspired by Brian, because everyone has a burden, everyone has an obstacle a darkness a difficulty in their life," Shadyac says.

Banks has been on the set constantly and he admits it's not always been easy to watch his own life play out.

"You gotta relive this stuff in order for this movie to be made, but then there's the other side of the scale and it easily outweighs the fear, it outweighs the past it outweighs my own individual struggle because I know that this movie is going to help so many people beyond me," Banks says.



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