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Bullet takes a life, and much more

Posted: July 19, 2006**Eugene Kane**

One by one, the teary-eyed group filed into the parking lot of one of Milwaukee's oldest restaurants on Old World 3rd St.

They didn't come to Mader's to eat; they came to mourn the death of Tobias Terrell, one of two men killed in a shootout outside a downtown nightclub early Sunday.

Terrell, 29, was killed with Rion A. Johnson, 22, outside Visions in yet another senseless shooting that happened when most people were just trying to have a good time.

Tobias' mother, Gloria Terrell, stood shellshocked in the midst of grieving relatives and friends Wednesday morning, near the spot in Mader's lot where her son died after running away from the gunfire.

Even after she heard the explanations about a shootout gone wild, it just didn't make any sense to her.

Advertisement Not her son.

"He was a very strong, giving person," Gloria Terrell said of Tobias. "He was always helping people, trying to always give back."

She said Tobias, like many young African-American men in Milwaukee, was trying to turn his life around after a period of incarceration. He recently opened up a downtown marketplace with a partner and had high hopes for his future.

"I thought downtown Milwaukee was supposed to be safe," she said, echoing comments made by lots of people since the shooting.

Tobias went to Visions Saturday night to party with his friends, just as he had done numerous times in the months since the club opened. Tobias probably felt safe because he was with his twin brother, Titus. The regulars at Visions knew them as "the twins."

Titus held back tears, remembering his slain brother as he stood with about 30 people holding a silent vigil.

"He was my twin; that's a special thing," Titus said. "I lost my brother, and I feel like I lost a piece of myself, too."

Titus said the altercation at Visions started inside the bar but seemed to have been quashed before the lights came up and everybody had to leave. Titus said he and his brother tried to act as peacemakers at one point with a quarrelling mob.

The bullet that ended Tobias' life was likely meant for someone else.

"He died for something he had nothing to do with," Titus said.

Just a block down the street, Visions was closed for business. But owner Gary Cash, who immediately surrendered his nightclub license after the shooting, said his club couldn't take all the blame for the shooting.

Cash said his dream was to open up a nightclub that would cater to a mature crowd that enjoyed music and sports.

"I just wanted to have a nice place for people to go," said Cash, who insisted his club wasn't "hip-hop" by definition. "We wanted to cater to an older crowd, but what we found is there's nowhere else for the youth to go."

Cash said his club had been the target of complaints by one neighboring business, but he denied police were regularly called to his establishment. At the same time, he said the experience had soured him on the nightclub business for good.

"I will never go back into the nightclub business," Cash declared. "The young people just don't know how to act."

Fed up with his city's violence, Titus said he wasn't sure if he would ever go to a club again. "These people don't realize when you kill someone like that, you're hurting his entire family."

Take it from a twin, who should certainly know.

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