



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

**Mandy Matney** 00:02

I don't know how many powerful people will be held accountable in this never ending saga. But last week three indictments were unsealed by the state grand jury and Russell Laffitte, Cory Fleming and Alex Murdaugh were hit with several charges related to the Hakeem Pinckney case and that is a big deal. My name is Mandy Matney. I have been investigating the Murdaugh family for more than three years now. This is the Murdaugh Murders Podcast with David Moses and Liz Farrell. Wow, so we had a busy week since our last podcast on Monday we found out Bowen Turner was arrested again and this time he was denied bond. We will get into that at the end of this episode as it definitely plays into this theme of accountability among the good old boys. So on Wednesday, the same day that our podcast episode named how many people will go down for this aired, the South Carolina Attorney General's Office announced three superseding indictments against Alex Murdaugh, his best friend Cory Fleming and his banger buddy Russell Laffitte. But before we get into all of that, I want to talk about a tweet by David Haskins that really stuck out to me in the last few weeks. The tweet said I hope the Beach family finds comfort and that their pursuit of justice for Mallory has helped lead to justice and restoration for so many other families too. Wow, it isn't every day where a kingdom publicly crumbles like this to see three very powerful men, two former attorneys and a former bank CEO get indicted for crimes where they allegedly took advantage of people who had less power than them. That is a big deal. And it's something we should stop and think about. All of these people are going down. And all of these investigations are happening right now, because of Mallory Beach.

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## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

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Because people loved her so much and said enough is enough, because her mother was brave enough to file a lawsuit when she felt she wasn't going to get answers or accountability. Without it. It is horrible that so many people including Mallory had to die for these ruthless crimes to be exposed. But I want everyone to know that we will make sure none of their deaths were in vain. So let's talk about these indictments. First of all, the indictments were handed down on April 14, but the Attorney General's office didn't make the announcement until May 4.

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**Liz Farrell** 02:55

This is sticky, because attorneys in this state will make the point that there's nothing unusual about what happened here. They will also say we don't know anything about the law. And this is why we have an issue with something they see as just the way it works here. Obviously, we understand that indictments can be sealed for multiple reasons, especially when we're talking about a criminal conspiracy and seemingly countless related investigations. Here's the thing, though, we know about the intense negotiating that goes on behind the scenes in terms of high priced defense attorneys seemingly calling the shots when their client gets arrested. Now, if the indictments are unsealed too soon, the public knows about them, and then wonders, well gee, why isn't this guy in jail in Paul Murdaugh's 2019 boat crash case, he never went to jail before or after his hearing. Dick Harpootlian and Jim Griffin went to great lengths, and some people seem to bend over backwards to get Paul processed in the courtroom after the hearing. And this counted as a quote unquote, arrest. This is what we're taking



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

issue with. Sure it's normal that someone like Russell Laffitte, who has the means to hire the best, can hold off on going to jail until just hours before his hearing. We're saying it shouldn't be normal. So our issue isn't with the length of time it took to unseal the indictments. In this case, it's with what we believe to be one of the possible reasons and that's to minimize the time between when the public finds out about the indictment and when an arrest is made. Remember Fitz news had been hearing since January that Russell Laffitte's indictment was imminent. According to our sources, Russell had been making preparations for this eventuality for a while on April 11. Literally three days before he was indicted, Russell put his house on the market, the one that was described as having a quote secret children's play room, which is a really weird thing to say a house has on April 28. It seemed like Russell was even able to sneak in what could actually end up being his final turkey hunt. But this is a problem two weeks earlier he was indicted for allegedly stealing 1.8 million dollars from very vulnerable people in very tragic situations, but he's still able to be out having a good old time for himself. photos of him after the haunt were posted on Facebook and featured him grinding away as if nothing was wrong. Again, everyone has the right to be considered innocent until proven guilty. Our question isn't about his guilt or innocence though it's about the deals that we know get made outside the public process that result in good old boys like Alex Russell and Cory getting treated much better than 99% of people accused of committing crimes. As of today, Cory hasn't even been arrested on his new charges in his second and third indictments, meaning quarry is now accused of defrauding three people. This is important because Cory's main defense and Russell's too

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## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

---

is that they were tricked by Alex and this does not appear to be a fool me once situation. When Alex was arrested in October of last year. It was a surprise to everyone SLED was not messing around. They went down to Florida and they extradited him back to South Carolina. This meant he didn't have the chance to flee if leaving the country was on his mind, and he didn't have the chance to commit any more alleged crimes. When the receivership was appointed in November, it meant Alex and his family were stopped from potentially hiding or degrading his assets based on Russell's and Corys indictments. It looks like they too might have had a lot of reasons to hide information or even to flee. So those turkey hunting photos aren't just showing a man having fun. They're showing a man who was free and easy to do whatever it is he might need to do to improve his future.

### **Mandy Matney** 06:37

All three of the indictments handed down in mid April were superseding indictments. This means that all three of the indictments that were previously handed down were updated, adding Russell to all three inquiry the two of them as well as adding new charges for Alex and Cory Russell Lucius Luffy, now faces 21 charges of conspiring with Alex Murdaugh to steal nearly \$2 million, including hundreds of 1000s of dollars in settlement money from the family of Hakeem Pinkney here is Attorney Justin Bamber, who is representing the Pinckney family.



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

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### **Justin Bamberg** 07:15

When we first heard of the indictments, it was bittersweet. It was a mix of emotion. I think there was excitement, because, you know, we had been waiting, we knew that there were certain things in the file that didn't look right. There were questionable checks and transactions. There were certain people's signatures on certain documents, and you know, we were just patiently waiting, like, what is going to happen? Like is, are we going to see justice in the form of accountability in the criminal justice system, and it happened, you know, I'm more excited for Miss Pinkney because there's a degree of thank God, the system is finally working for me, which sounds really crazy because they were involved in those underlying accidents and all the pain and, and all that trauma, and everyone is familiar with that. But the system was supposed to work for them over a decade ago and it didn't. Now here you are with all these old wounds reopened, and now you see the system working for you. And I was very happy for Miss P.

### **Mandy Matney** 08:20

As you know, Hakeem was a deaf man who became a quadriplegic in a 2009 car crash. He died mysteriously in 2011. After his respirator became unplugged. Hakeem died four days after Alex settled his car crash case, another attorney from PMPED, who specializes in medical malpractice cases handled a wrongful death case for Hakeem's estate. But using his position of trust and as a representative of the bank, Russell Laffitte first served as Hakeem's conservator and then after Hakeem died mysteriously he served as a personal representative of Hakeem's estate. He obviously was impressed with the work he did for Hakeem because





## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

---

he paid himself handsomely from Hakeem's settlement money. Also in more trouble, we're Alex, who was indicted on for additional charges and Hakeem's case, as well as the case of Arthur Badger and Cory Fleming who, like we said, is now accused of bilking a second victim, Hakeem and a third victim Hakeem's cousin and Tasha Thomas, for which he faces an additional five charges two of the three indictments focus on the Pinckney car crash. We did a deep dive into the Hakeem Pinckney story and episode 28 on January 19, if you haven't listened to it already, we recommend you to go back and listen. It was one of the hardest and the most emotional episodes we've ever done. There are so many victims in this case and so many storylines and the details can sometimes get lost in the crowd. But the details are especially important in this case, because it's now much more clear that Alex's alleged criminal business model for the Gloria Satterfield scheme was built long before her death and 2018. In the Hakeem Pinckney episode we mentioned that the Pinckney family's Attorney Justin Bamberg was looking into whether or not money was stolen from Hakeem, his mother and his cousin. The state grand jury was also looking into this. And obviously, two days after our episode in January Alex was indicted for allegedly helping himself to some of their money. This is a complex situation, though, and Justin is continuing to investigate the potential damage here is what he's found so far.

### **Justin Bamberg** 10:51

You know, after Tom we of course had documents associated with the underlying wreck case that led to him becoming a quadriplegic. And after a while, we did obtain a copy of his file for the nursing home death



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

case. And there were a couple of red flags that jumped out at us almost immediately, and one of them is pretty disturbing. We're still investigating, trying to get down to the bottom of it. But we obtained a copy of the medical billing statement for Hakeem. For treatment, who does this and this indicates that providers had billed X amount Medicaid obviously never pays all the bills, they pay a portion and then they assert a lien, right. And that's why if you look at his wrongful death settlement approval petition, it references \$50,000 being withheld to account for a lien These are public documents. The problem is, the numbers don't match up because the disbursement of the money stolen indicates \$50,000 being withheld or paid to a lien holder. What the disbursement indicates is that \$183,000 In change is what went to Medicaid, Medicaid had only spent \$46,000 bucks according to the documents that we've seen. So we're investigating to find out exactly how much Medicaid gets. What exactly went on? And did Alex Murdaugh make off with more money or not? And hopefully we'll find out the answer soon. You know, every time you look at anything taught to that man, tada Alex Murdaugh, you've got to use a microscope, because the devil really is in the details. And that's one of the difficulties of getting answers for the victims is, sometimes things are not what they seem. When you just look on paper, you've got to look through the paper. And yeah, all I can say about that.

### **Mandy Matney** 12:50

This should all sound very familiar. We saw a lot of these same things in the Gloria Satterfield case, however, it appears that Palmetto State Bank, specifically the son of its CEO at the time, Russel Laffitte, was a lot



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

---

more involved in the Pinckney case than they were in the Satterfield case. In fact, as you remember, Russell's seems to have passed on the opportunity to serve as personal representative in the Satterfield case and gave it to his vice president Chad Westendorf. Who put the I don't know and fiduciary here is a breakdown of what investigators say Russell quarry and Alex stole from the Pinckney family. The three allegedly worked together to take more than \$350,000 from Natasha Thomas's trust. That's hurricanes cousin Russell and Elek are accused of stealing nearly \$310,000 from Hakeem Pinckney needs a state and by the way, they did this on December 21 2011, which is two months after have keen died and four days before the very first Christmas the Pinckney family would spend without their loved one Alex and Cory allegedly conspired to take almost \$90,000 from Pamela pink needs accounts and guess what Cory is accused of doing with about \$8,000 of Miss Pamela's money, he appears to have treated himself Alex and another attorney and we're trying to figure out who that was with a luxurious trip to Omaha, Nebraska on a private airplane to attend the 2012 College World Series. It is sickening to picture Alex, Cory and whoever this mysterious guest is living the highlife on the backs of people who just lost so much.

### **Justin Bamberg** 14:46

So the same moves that were bold on Hakeem and again remember, this is one of the most disturbing things about this entire situation is when the case settled Hakeem, he was alive and he was deaf and he's quadriplegic in his nursing home. Miss P was looking forward to doing what she had to do to bring him home. That's why she authorized the





## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

settlement in the first place. I'm saying, Hakeem, unfortunately, had already passed away. None of these checks should have been cut in the first place. Right? There's a process by which and I have unfortunately been in a situation myself with clients before I had a client and we got his case on and the money's on the way. And unfortunately, the client dies. You don't just get to go and cut checks. Again, that's not how this works. We have laws in the state, there are rules and processes and procedures. And at that point, money's got to go to his estate. The conservatorship that was previously established was dogs with hachi, literally dogs with Hakeem.

**Mandy Matney** 16:02

Last week, we gave you a rundown on some of Justin's findings in the Pinckney case and some of the unorthodox ways the two are accused of spinning pink needs money, including a check for \$100,000 to Russell's father, Charlie a \$10,000 check to Maggie Murdaugh, more than \$300,000 to Alex's father and our former solicitor Randolph Murdaugh the third, we have not been kidding you when we tell you just how complex the Murdaugh investigation is. Finally, the last accusation in the latest indictments says that Russell and Alex conspired to steal nearly \$1.2 million from an Allendale man named Arthur Badger, whose case will tell you more about in a future episode so far Alex faces 82 charges 79 from his alleged financial crimes and three from the shooting incident is accused of stealing around \$9 million. So far. He faces more than 700 years in prison. Cory was first indicted in March on 18 charges related to his alleged role in the Gloria Satterfield case; he stands accused of stealing almost \$4 million from

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## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

---

two sets of clients. He faces up to 207 years in prison. Again, Russell is accused of stealing almost \$2 million. He faces up to 140 years in prison.

**Liz Farrell** 17:34

Do you guys ever think about the co-conspirators who haven't been publicly identified yet? I definitely do. I imagine them sitting at home bouncing their legs right now and jumping every time their phone buzzes is this it? Have they found out yet, if we've learned anything from this last set of indictments beyond the fact that some people seem to be able to schedule their arraignments like their Botox appointments, it's that there has been such a profound lack of accountability in South Carolina for so long that these guys didn't seem to take the time to cover their tracks. And if they did, it wasn't until the writing was on the wall for them. Which means Alex and Russell are basically the Hansel and Gretel of Hampton County, leaving breadcrumbs that are leading police to all their friends, gingerbread houses, which were built with stolen cookies. I mean this with all sincerity, we hope every single person involved in taking money from people is identified and has to answer publicly for their actions. And I cannot stress this enough, I sure do hope they can shed some light on where all this allegedly stolen money went. Because here's the thing, that handful of lawyers who seemed to jump at the chance to tell Mandy and me that we don't understand the law. And that's why we're seeing problems in the system. They're usually the same ones who also try to say that white collar crimes are not as bad as violent crimes, which is I don't even know where to start with that. Really, stealing money isn't the same as murdering a human being I had no idea. Thank goodness, I asked

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## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

about that. To us the question is simple. When it comes to white collar crimes, did you hurt someone in exchange for your personal enrichment? Did you try to create a better life for yourself using money that was not yours, because taking advantage of someone who might not be aware that you're doing it in order to steal from them is hurting them? It's kind of like this, when you put money in savings, the bank gives you a percentage of interest, right? It's tiny. In fact, for most of us, it's not even all that noticeable. We're basically lending the bank our money in exchange for the convenience of spending it but if we borrow the money from the bank, well, my God they sure do make a lot of money off of that right? Well, here's the test for anyone in favor of a lighter hand of justice for white collar criminals. If proportionally someone they trusted and someone they were paying to do a job for them after they or their loved ones were in a catastrophic accident stole the same amount of their money that Alex Russell and Cory are accused of stealing From the victims, would they be like, oh geez, why is everyone getting so up in arms? It's just money. It's not like it's murder. No, in fact, the proof is in the pudding. Just last week, Alex, attorneys were in court stomping their hooves on the ground and an effort to regain control over Alex's assets. Why? Oh my gosh, because it's not fair to Alex. Of course, Alex deserves his money back to my savings account example, when the lawyers or their friends are taking the money, it's met with a shrug and get over it. But when it's the lawyers' money, or their friends' money, will everyone get ready for a tantrum. So maybe they believe white collar crime should be treated differently from violent crimes over here, we just don't because this is apparently 1% of the bigger picture and just look at the damage they've done. Allegedly.

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## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

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### **Justin Bamberg** 20:46

At the very end of the day, every knee shall bow. And what's done in the dark will often come to the light. And it may take time. And this was just 11 years, but it happened. You know, and the only thing I can think of, you know is I mean, think about it, what's worse, doing some stupid stuff and getting caught right after you do it or doing it and thinking that your life has moved on. And it's 10 years later, and whether you still doing the failures you previously had or not, they come back to bite you. That's probably harder. And they didn't call it right when it happened. You know, you think about them, people who you know, and you read about once you read about that person who like that, all of a sudden, there's this assault the murder from 40 years ago, and the person who gets charged for it, like literally has a whole new life and just figure that had never come up and all of a sudden 40 years later off the prison you go buddy use in court, right? I mean, you never know. That's why you gotta keep your nose clean. do things the right way, and it ain't hard or decimals. The dumbest thing about this entire ordeal is it's not hard to be a decent person.

### **Mandy Matney** 22:03

And we'll be right back. To that leads us to the bond hearing on Thursday morning Russell Laffitte appeared before Judge Allison Lee for his bond hearing that hearing was virtual. Russell was cuffed and wearing a green jumpsuit for the bond hearing. He apparently turned himself in Friday morning at the Kershaw County Detention Center. Kershaw County is about 30 minutes from the Richland County Courthouse. It is not clear why Russell turned himself in there but it's



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

---

likely because of staffing issues at the Alvin S Glen Detention Center where Alex is or because of the current jail population there that jail apparently has a lot of trouble beyond Alex Murdaugh. Laffitte hired a powerful legal team, including former US Attorney Bart Daniel and Matt Austin. Hiring a former US Attorney indicates that Russell might be anticipating federal charges as well. Ostensibly, he likely hired Daniel for his abilities and his influence. He's highly respected in South Carolina and by the way was involved in prosecuting defendants caught up in operation jackpot in the 1980s go back to Episode 31. To hear more about jackpot. At times wrestle appeared super casual about the situation in his hearings. Alex looks like an inmate emeritus, someone completely at ease and his scrubs and his bloody knuckles. But who'd also like to get out of there if that's an option, but if not, no big deal. He has his meat sticks. Cory looked utterly furious at his bond hearing, which is a good facial expression to have when you want a roomful of people to believe that you've been hustled by your best friend and now your running schedule has been interrupted. Russell had a totally different vibe. It was kinda like he was trying to act casual while hiding his frustrations that he had to wait an hour or so before bonding out Creighton Waters spoke first told the court key details of the state's case against Russell Laffitte.

### **Creighton Waters** 24:08

In total, Your Honor, between the three indictments we have 15 counts of breach of trust 10,000 or more three counts of computer crimes and 1000 or more and three counts of criminal conspiracy. The total charges are 21. All of these are felonies, Your Honor. And the total amount of





## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

---

exposure is up to 170 years. And the total alleged amount which I'll describe at the appropriate time is about \$1.8 million in alleged fraud.

**Mandy Matney** 24:37

Attorney Matt Austin was next to speak. Austin argued his client should be released on his own recognizance or a 10% cash bond.

**Matt Austin** 24:47

Mr. Laffitte is a good candidate for for release he is presents no danger to the community. There's no threat of violence implicating any of the charges that He has been charged with TSA. These are all financial crimes to the extent he has had, or would have any ability to carry out similar crimes as alleged. He would require him to still be working at the bank and no longer works there. So that's not even possible. He's a lifelong resident of Hampton County. In fact, he's never lived outside of South Carolina at all and has no intention to besides going to Newberry College where he graduated in 1997. He's lived in Hampton his entire life. And yes, substantial, strong ties to the community. With us today is his wife Susan, you've 21 years on his daughter who's a college student is a son at home as well. He just actually turned 17 today, so we're hoping and get back for his birthday. And his sister Grace is here as well. She also lives in Hampton.

**Liz Farrell** 25:55

Imagine that this was happening on the day of his son's 17th birthday. If this was the move, by the way for Russell to check into jail on his son's birthday. Brilliant because it made Russell look like he got mercilessly



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

---

plucked from the warm and fuzzy comfort of dad life by the cold hearted state. It also reminded the room that Russell had family who loved him enough to keep track of him. And if they didn't get that message from the birthday announcement, they had visuals to prove it. Russell's family showed their support from a conference room with his attorneys. Frankly, their presentation was not as good as the one Corys attorney Debbie Barbier had created for his remote family support experience. She looked like the captain of a ship that was filled with very concerned passengers. Russell's attorneys somehow managed to make it look like he'd been called into HR and was about to be fired for his browsing history.

### **Matt Austin** 26:47

Mr. Laffitte is extremely active in the community. Given the nature of his prior job, it's a community bank and he is very involved in his community. He's a member of the Rotary Club of Hampton. He was the previous Vice Chair of the Hampton county disabilities and special needs board, previous member of the Hampton County Economic Development Board. He's a member of All Saints Episcopal Church, and he served as treasurer at one point as well. Again, he has no ties anywhere outside of South Carolina that would warrant him being deemed a flight risk and all of his ties are very firmly in here in the state and so he has zero criminal record. He has his no, there's no danger of him not appearing for court. He has cooperated with the investigation from the outset. Actually, prior to our being retained in the case actually, he willfully has been interviewed. He is showing up every time we've asked him to show up. We you turn himself in the scoring there's



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

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been zero problems. So for these reasons we think that you'd be appropriate for release on bail.

**Liz Farrell** 28:04

His attorneys didn't know it yet. But Creighton Waters brought a big bag of their breadcrumbs with him to the hearing.

**Creighton Waters** 28:12

I also want to point out that while this case is related to Alex Murdaugh, Mr. Laffitte is a different person than Alex Murdaugh. However, what the allegations are here and what we see is there's a long association between Mr. Russell Laffitte and Alex Murdaugh, there's a long association between their families is very prominent families in Hampton County and Mr. Laffitte, as he just stated has served 24 years at Palmetto State Bank, which is a local bank headquartered there. He was the vice president of loans for an extended period of time he was the CEO. And up until this termination, he was the CEO so a long time in senior leadership in that bank. Your Honor, of course is also heard of the string of financial allegations against Alex Murtaugh and what we have seen from that is a exhausting sort of velocity of money over many, many years. On behalf of Mr Murdaugh, and in addition, anything that he might legitimately earn, he constantly had to beg, borrow and allegedly steal to stay afloat, and a important cog in that hamster wheel constantly spinning was his friend at Palmetto State Bank that being Russell Laffitte.



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

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### **Mandy Matney** 29:28

It's important that Creighton Waters said this because this is law enforcement acknowledging that both Russell and Palmetto State Bank played a key role in this heist. Waters then explain the details of the scheme.

### **Creighton Waters** 29:43

But ultimately, what he also was doing was loaning six figure figures of money to Alex and these loans from the money kept Alex afloat. They were off the books from the bank. weren't too close to the bank and, of course Mr. Laffitte has got to make sure that those get paid back because he has conservators responsible for those. Ultimately, Alex gets Mr. Laffitte appointed in fiduciary responsibility for the victims we have here and that would be Miss Pamela Pinkney. Her now deceased son Hakeem Pickney, their relative Natasha Thomas. All of them are represented by Justin Bamberg as well as Arthur Badger, and he's represented by Mr. Mark Tinsley.

### **Mandy Matney** 30:31

Here Creighton was describing the checks that we told you about in our last episode five, six figure payments, quote used in the manner to give the illusion of regular payments that are used to pay back the loans that Mr. Laffitte had given Alex from the conservatorship and quote he said that ultimately, quote, there's about \$1.8 million and alleged fraud that comes from this alleged scheme and we have 21 felonies to date as it relates to this ongoing investigation. Finally, Creighton Waters made an interesting comment about Laffitte's alleged cooperation, Mr.



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

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### **Creighton Waters** 31:09

As far as cooperation, the most I will say about that as Mr. Laffitte has given statements, and I'll just leave it at that.

### **Mandy Matney** 31:18

Prosecutor Creighton Waters made a point to say this, that Russell hasn't been involved in a two way conversation with law enforcement, at least not in a way that's been helpful providing statements and certain documents, especially after you've been caught in the middle of a scheme such as this one. A scheme that has a clear paper trail does not in any way absolve you from the crime. The prosecution ultimately asked for a surety bond of 25,000 per felony, which is about a \$500,000 bond. He also asked that there would be no contact with victims or bank employees. Attorney Justin Bamberg representing the Pinckney family spoke after Waters. He argued that even though this is a non violent crime, what happened to the Pinckney family was horrific.

### **Justin Bamberg** 32:09

There are victims or in to truly understand that, Your Honor, I think the court needs to know what happened to you know, this was a very, very, very horrible accident, it actually left Mr. Hakim paint me on a quadriplegic in a nursing home. And it is important to note that some of the money that was misappropriated was actually done, after the young man had suffocated to death in the nursing home. Many effectively became brain dead. And the reason I mentioned that, Your Honor is some may say there's no threat of violence speaking to danger to the community, Mr. Luffy does have access to firearms, per social





## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

---

media, it appears that just seven days ago, he was out talking on. I mean, it's not as simple because it's white collar or stolen money. Um, the callousness that was displayed with regards to what the victims were going with at the time, I think is indicative of being a danger to the community or not caring about what happens with somebody or what was going on in their life. Um, as to flight risks.

**Mandy Matney** 33:25

Ah the turkey pictures on social media that Liz mentioned earlier, Justin makes a great point. It's not just about the turkeys. It's about how Laffitte clearly has access to guns and clearly knows how to use them. Justin also mentioned that Russell Laffitte put his house on the market on April 11.

**Justin Bamberg** 33:45

And as far as the victims know, there, they have no idea that they live in these communities and they have no idea where he does intend to reside, or whether he intends to go somewhere else. But if you're going to sell your house, you obviously don't intend to live there. So we will raise that to the core. He also has access to friends and associates, for example, who have access to private planes. Some of the money that was misappropriated from these individuals was used by apparently some of his friends and associates to fly to Omaha, Nebraska.

**Mandy Matney** 34:23

Finally, Justin Bamberg argued that Russell Laffitte is a wealthy person who could afford basically any bond.



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

---

### **Justin Bamberg** 34:31

But he has the ability to pay any, any bond set by the court. Mr. Laffite owns 9% of the shares in Palmetto State bank that is 23,365 shares of a bank that has a value of over \$700 million. So any bond even if the even if your honor, made Bond equal to the dollar amount of the money that was misappropriated from the victims who still have the ability to pay it off. So, Your Honor, we ask that the bond amount given ensure that Mr. Laffitte does not run to ensure that Mr. Laffitte has a vested interest in sticking around. And that would be the statement on behalf of the victims. Your honor, thank you so much for allowing me to speak on their behalf.

### **Mandy Matney** 35:27

Matt Austin, Russell Laffitte's attorney quickly responded to Justin's speech and he made jokes.

### **Matt Austin** 35:35

You know, Mr. Laffitte, likes to hide and there may be some danger to local turkeys. But there's no, there's no indication that he is a danger to anybody else in the community hasn't been charged with doing anything that's physically violent.

### **Liz Farrell** 35:49

I know. We sometimes make jokes on this podcast, but we're not the ones sitting on a remote screen in a courtroom with handcuffs on and in a jumpsuit that makes us look like Kermit the Frog mechanic. There



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

---

may be some danger to local turkeys is definitely retirement speech material. Oh, wait.

**Matt Austin** 36:06

Yeah, it's just it's I can't think of a case with less risk for defendant to have any, any concerns like that, with regard to his cooperation with law enforcement as well, he said. I would respectfully disagree with Mr. Waters. characterization is just stating in some sort of feet has met with the DHS office, the US Attorney's Office, the FBI, sled and has been grilled, has answered questions has provided statements, but also answers and clarifies things provided helpful information for law enforcement. And so I think it goes beyond your statements. Again, it's not worth quibbling over, you know, it's worth noting because it shows you where his where he is mentally in this whole process. He's not trying to hide from anything. And that speaks to another point in all of this as well, that is just I think, interesting with these facts is that he was appointed, with the court's permission to be conservator. And so many of these filings that are used and referred to throughout this process they haven't been located through in some safety deposit box somewhere in squirreled away, they've been in court. And so, to an extent, he's trying to get away with crimes, he is doing so by putting his own name not other people's names on documents and filing with the court. So if you are continue to commit crimes in that way, then I would think there'd be a pretty good paper trail for the government. So I just don't think there's any risk of him engaging in that kind of conduct.



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

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**Liz Farrell** 37:46

And then Creighton Waters was like, Your Honor, if I may, would you like some more breadcrumbs.

**Creighton Waters** 37:52

Your Honor, but money that he promptly took down when things started to fall apart, and things started to come to light. And again, this always, always worked for a really long time, as long as people trust, and they don't look at what the documents say, and what's really going on. My distinction between cooperation and statements has to do with content. And I will leave it at that. The money that Mr. Laffite, properly took once things started to come to light, and the new light would start to shine on him. whatnot of his personal funds, it was out of the funds of the bank. So your honor, I would question how much credit I would give him for that. We want to talk about his statements. You know, one of the things that he mentioned in his statements was how, you know, he likes to boat to the Bahamas. So he has the ability in excess to do that.

**Mandy Matney** 38:47

I'm honestly trying to picture a scenario where Russell would put that fun fact about boating in the Bahamas in a statement to please But anyways, waters added that the charges are serious and the court needs to issue a substantial bond to ensure both the safety of the community and to make sure he shows up for court. He pointed out that Russell put his house up for sale, which could be an indication that he has no plans or reason to stay in the area. And he was trying to



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

---

liquidate his assets quickly. Although the general consensus seems to be that Russell put his house on the market to raise money to pay for his attorneys. But Russell's lawyers actually told the judge Russell was selling his house to raise money for the victims, which is interesting because we thought he said he was tricked and all of this, wouldn't that make them Alex's victims in this case? And wouldn't that mean that Russell didn't steal anything and therefore has nothing to pay back? There's one bright side and Russell's lawyers putting that on the record. Here's Justin Bamberg.

### **Justin Bamberg** 39:53

The information that is out, and the information that has been talked about is Very, very disheartening in terms of the failures of people who are supposed to have these folks back in the breaches of duties, that fiduciary duties. And it's a lot of them, you know, and it's very disheartening, and we're gonna see what the system does and what the prosecutors do with the case. But I can say this, I was pleased to hear this as was on the paint nice when one of the criminal lawyers for Mr. Laffitte actually said at the bond hearing, one reason Mr. Laffitte was trying to sell that home and some other stuff was to try and make it right, with victims or whatever. And that was very positive to hear.

### **Mandy Matney** 40:49

Back to the bond hearing, Judge Lee ordered a \$1 million surety bond for Luffy with house arrest when he post bail, here were her reasons for that.





## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

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### **Judge Lee** 41:01

While he is a respected member of the community, and he is not posing a physical threat to any person, there are allegations that he engaged in behavior that would be less than honorable and, and potentially criminal, depending on the view of the evidence once the jury has the opportunity to hear it. So I think that he does have the ability to be able to flee while he may not be inclined to do so. The fact of the matter is that there's severe serious allegations that are pending against him. Many of them carry multiple years of incarceration potential for incarceration. And while it's not always a desire for someone to lead the state, oftentimes it does occur. And so that that hence my reason for house arrest with electronic monitoring and he may not lead the state.

### **Mandy Matney** 42:00

Per the conditions of his bond Russell Laffitte will be required to surrender his passport and will be electronically monitored while under house arrest. He is also barred from conducting any banking business. Lee also froze Laffitte's assets. Laffitte posted bond later Friday afternoon. Let's hope that the state does a better job tracking the whereabouts of live feeds ankle monitor than they did with Bowen Turner. And speaking of that, we'll be right back. So now we need to talk about the Bowen Turner case. I have to be honest, what happened this week made me both angry and terrified. And frankly, I'm so relieved. I'm not sitting here telling you about another girl's life being ruined or worse. So 19-year old Bowen Turner who was accused of raping three girls between 2018 and 2019 was arrested Sunday evening in his



## **EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested**

---

hometown of Orangeburg County, South Carolina. On Mother's Day evening in Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office deputy reportedly found Bowen stumbling around the middle of a road and reeking of booze. Sources told FITS News that Earlier that evening, he bought more than \$100 of booze at a local bar and repeatedly tried to get a female employee at the bar to give him a ride home. When a deputy found him Turner originally claimed he was visiting Ted's, a local bar about three miles from his house but later he claimed he came from the woods. It's important to note here that two of the three teen girls who Turner is accused of raping each said they were assaulted in the woods late at night while Bowen was drinking. Late Sunday evening Bowen Turner was charged with public disorderly conduct. He was taken to the detention center where he reportedly threatened to bite the finger off of a deputy he could face more charges though the Orangeburg County Public Index indicated that Turner received and posted a surety bond of about \$250, which was set by county magistrate Derek Dash. He was still detained until Monday afternoon for a hearing related to his second charge of violating his probation. During that hearing, Judge Mary Williamson told the court that she considered Bowen Turner to be a danger to the community and she denied bond on the probation violation charge. It is not lost on us that a female judge made this crucial decision to choose public safety over the good ole boys. According to our sources. Turner is being held without bond at the detention center until June 8th when a hearing is scheduled in his probation violation case. It is not known if state senator Brad Hutto is still representing him. During the hearing Turner apparently argued that he should be released because this was the first time he violated



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

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his probation. And he said that he never missed a court date prior. One of my sources told me he came across as entitled and showed no empathy. Here's the thing, exactly one month before this incident, Judge Markley Dennis sentenced Bowen to five years probation after he pled guilty to assault and battery in Chloe Bess' case, it was a sweetheart deal of a lifetime considering the charges that were stacked against him and in less than one month. Bowen Turner predictably proved to everyone that he was not a defendant who deserved the benefit of the doubt he could not stay out of trouble for one month. While this is incredibly disturbing, there are two bright spots. One is that it was validating for the victims and their families. It despite the pressures they have faced at great personal risks to themselves have pushed hard to get our state's justice system to see that they have made a big mistake here. And to thank God, it was just public disorderly conduct, because there are very legitimate concerns the prosecutor David Miller, Judge Dennis and Brad Hutto had inadvertently conspired to put the community in danger. And with a spotlight of the national press shining bright on Orangeburg County, the good ole boys could no longer protect their prodigal son. And for now, at least until his hearing on June 8th, he will be in jail where he can't hurt any girls. But I don't want to talk about Bowen right now. I want to talk about all of the people who helped him get here people who should be very, very relieved that the woman at the bar didn't take Bowen home Sunday evening. I want to be clear about something here. Every single person who has normalized Bowens' bad behavior over the last few years, every person who supported him and bullied his victims and their families, every person who drank at his parties who gave him a pass, who served



## EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested

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him booze under age and hung out with him. Like everything was fine. You are the problem. I have seen a couple people making excuses for his parents, people saying things like there's only so much a 19 year olds parents can do to control him know, these parents allegedly threw a party for him the day he got the sweetheart deal for the rape charges. These parents got a state senator to represent their son who shielded him from all consequences. Bowen's parents have chosen to protect their son at all costs, even above the safety of others. Judge Dennis, Prosecutor David Miller, and Senator Brad Hutto, aka the good ole boys who play their cards for Bowen. They are all the problem. What scares me the most is I see so many shocking similarities between Paul Murdaugh and Bowen Turner. Both Paul and Bowen were shielded by their parents and the good ol boys and yet their parents still had no control over them like Paul Bowen has a history of getting violent when he drinks. This pattern is disturbing and terrifying. How many times do we have to learn this lesson about what happens to our girls when our system chooses to protect boys like Paul and Bowen? We will continue shining sunlight on this case because accountability matters in the systems that enabled the criminality in the Murdaugh saga also allow Chloe, Dallas and countless others to be re-victimized with its failures. Stay tuned. We would like to take a moment to thank Katie Gambler for her huge donation to Hopeful Horizons. Katie is an expert in residential sales throughout Beaufort and Jasper Counties with her team at Charter One Realty. Katie, thank you for believing in Hopeful Horizons' mission to create safer communities by changing the culture of violence and offering a path to healing. To learn more about Katie , Charter One or Hopeful Horizons, click the link in the description or call

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## **EPISODE 44: 'The Devil's in the Details' Russell Laffitte Indicated on 21 Charges + Bowen Turner Arrested**

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her at 843-605-8862. The Murdaugh Murder's Podcast is created by me, Mandy Matney and my fiance David Moses. Our executive editor is Liz Farrell. Produced by Luna Shark Productions.

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