



EPISODE 2: Under Oath, But Above Consequence?

[00:00:00] **Mandy Matney:** Happy Friday, Murdaugh Murders Podcast superfans. And welcome to our second "Cup of Justice" bonus episode, serving you hot legal takes to get your weekend started on the right foot.

[00:00:26] A couple things before we start. On Wednesday's episode of the Murdaugh Murders Podcast, episode 62, we told you about what went down at Russell Laffitte's shocking bond modification hearing in federal court. Highly suggest y'all go back to that episode before listening to this one so it makes the most sense. But for a quick recap, Russell and his wife Susie asked the court to remove the federal ankle monitor because it was interfering with their lifestyle. The judge didn't reverse her decision, but did take Russell off of house arrest. After reading the transcript from the hearing, Liz Farrell, Eric Bland, and I got together and had a good time analyzing everything that went down at that hearing. There was so much ground to cover. And shout-out to The Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa, one of my favorite spots on Hilton Head, for hooking us up with a gorgeous setting to record this episode in. Y'all are awesome and we really appreciate the hospitality.

[00:01:30] So there is a lot happening with this case right now because Russell is sort of set to go to trial in November on the six federal charges he's facing, which includes conspiracy to commit wire and bank fraud, two counts of bank fraud, one count of wire fraud, and two counts of misapplication of bank funds. On Wednesday afternoon, a federal grand jury issued a second superseding indictment against Russell that basically corrected some errors in the previous indictments and added more information about the crimes he is accused of committing, which we will cover in a later episode. But today, we're going to talk about the shocking decision from Russell's defense team to put him on the stand, to put his wife on the stand, and how the justice system can be different for a privileged person like Russell Laffitte. So to start off, let's talk about the players, beginning with Assistant US Attorney Emily Limehouse, the lead prosecutor on the case.

[00:02:33] **Eric Bland:** This will tell you how good a lawyer Emily Limehouse is. She did not know that Russell was going to testify. So it's not like, you know, when I have a trial, the judge will say, "Okay, who's gonna put up what witness



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tomorrow?" And you'll say, "Well, I'm putting up Jerry." Well, I'll go home and I'll pull out all the exhibits and I'll prepare my cross-examination with Jerry. She was going in for a bond modification hearing, Emily. She didn't even know that Mrs. Laffitte was gonna be reading a statement, so —

[00:03:03] **Mandy Matney:** Well, she lucked out.

[00:03:04] **Eric Bland:** — on the fly, when Bart was giving the direct examination to Russell. She's preparing a cross-examination. And I gotta tell you, that girl did really good.

[00:03:15] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. So Mandy, you heard opinion of Emily Limehouse after reading that. What do you think?

[00:03:20] **Mandy Matney:** Well, I thought that they, I thought Bart Daniel and team underestimated her. I think that they thought that they could put Russell on the stand and get their "feel sorry for us." And she, I think they assumed that she would throw softball questions at him. And man, she rapid-fired, drilled it home.

[00:03:41] **Eric Bland:** If the goal was for him to get empathy from the judge or from those that listened to it, I think it failed.

[00:03:48] **Liz Farrell:** Well, because, as you pointed out, it's like a phrasing of some of the things that she said to him. Like she, it's like intentional phrasing that she said. So the minor, at any time she was referring to the victims, she made sure that the courtroom or the record knows that these are not just, these are minor, like you took from children, just to reiterate. And then she would, you know, what the income tax, like she would make these little sort of things and get him to say the thing that is the most, basically the obvious to the rest of us and kind of stunning that he would admit some of that stuff.

[00:04:20] **Eric Bland:** Like he said, she said, "Well, you didn't pay this back." And he said, "Yes, I did." And she said, "No. You lied about that." And he said, "No, I didn't. I'm telling him the truth." And then she'd show him and he said, "Well, I guess I was wrong." Well, really, if you're under oath and you're gonna tell the truth, tell the truth. Don't have to be proven wrong, and then when you're proven wrong, you just get to say, "I was just a little incorrect."



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[00:04:42] **Liz Farrell:** Right. Yeah. So who among us laughed when Russell got that second ankle monitor? We can be honest.

[00:04:49] **Eric Bland:** We all laughed.

[00:04:50] **Mandy Matney:** I laughed. I thought it was so funny.

[00:04:51] **Liz Farrell:** It seemed a little unbelievable, but I guess the idea that —

[00:04:54] **Eric Bland:** The only people that were shocked in the courtroom was the Murdaugh side. Our side, when we got up and we argued —

[00:05:00] **Liz Farrell:** Did you just call them the Murdaugh side?

[00:05:01] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. I think that's what they are. And, you know —

[00:05:05] **Mandy Matney:** They call themselves victims.

[00:05:08] **Eric Bland:** Listen, they're all trying to separate themselves from Alex, but they were tied to the hip with him for 40 years when it was convenient. So now, when it's inconvenient, you can't separate. But the fact of the matter is it was a joke to think that this man should get a \$20,000 bond with no restrictions on federal charges when the sentences that, if he's convicted, are over 10 years. These are serious crimes. And like I said, it's not a parking ticket.

[00:05:34] **Liz Farrell:** Right. So now, September 6th, back in the federal court.

[00:05:37] **Eric Bland:** But you saw what was gonna happen because in the original bond hearing, Bart or was it Matt Austin got up and said, "We don't disagree with much of what has been said. What we're saying is what he did wasn't criminal." So that was a forecast of what we heard on September 6th because when Russell testified, he basically admitted to everything. And then, if you go to the transcript on page 112, Bart gave you his conclusion. Bart Daniel said he breached his fiduciary duties, he was negligent and possibly grossly negligent, but he's not criminal.



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[00:06:14] **Mandy Matney:** So I just have to say that taking this case to trial is a big gamble for Russell because he faces dozens of years in federal prison. And having Russell take the stand just a couple months before he's set to go to trial, that is a huge gamble, especially all just for a pesky ankle monitor.

[00:06:37] **Eric Bland:** No, and a judge usually doesn't reverse their decision. That's a big thing for a judge. When a judge makes a ruling, judges don't like to change their order because if they change their order, then they start to look like they're vacillating, or they weren't really sure, wasn't a good order the first time.

[00:06:54] **Liz Farrell:** And there really wasn't a good, did you read the motion and the memos in support and against?

[00:06:59] **Eric Bland:** Right. There wasn't, there really wasn't cogent reasons why there should be a change or why Judge Cherry was wrong the first time.

[00:07:06] **Liz Farrell:** Right.

[00:07:07] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah.

[00:07:07] **Liz Farrell:** That was —

[00:07:08] **Mandy Matney:** I've read it as like kind of a whining. So like that's what it seemed like to me.

[00:07:14] **Eric Bland:** Well, this has been the whole thing in this Murdaugh case. All these defense lawyers are kicked back on their heels. You can't parlay on your back foot. And they're all shocked. Dick and Jim were shocked when Alex's bond was \$7 million.

[00:07:30] **Liz Farrell:** Boy, were they ever.

[00:07:31] **Eric Bland:** First, he didn't get bond by Judge Newman. And then Judge Lee, who they thought is gonna be more amenable to a lower bond, she comes in at seven million bucks. Not even a 10%, just raise seven million.



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[00:07:47] **Liz Farrell:** I have to ask Mandy. Do you like, is that one of the most particular points of pride is when you see the Good Ole Boys, like the look on their face when they realize they haven't gotten their way?

[00:07:56] **Mandy Matney:** I will never forget the first bond hearing. It was technically Alex's second bond hearing in Columbia when Newman denied his bond and Harpootlian, I was right behind him, and he stood up and just freaked out.

[00:08:11] **Eric Bland:** That was our arguments because I got up and I told Judge Newman, "There's 300 cameras here in this courtroom and the whole world's watching. Our justice system is on trial. Our states have a black eye." And Ronnie said, "Well, I don't think, you know, I think the bond should be commensurate with how much he stole. I think it should be eight million bucks." And like, the whole courtroom, all the lawyers are like, nobody's ever asked for \$8 million before.

[00:08:35] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, it turned into The Muppet Show for a minute there with a lot of people murmuring.

[00:08:40] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah.

[00:08:41] **Eric Bland:** Because you remember Dick got up after he said, you know, the bond, he's like, I immediately want you to reconsider this. What do we do? You know, let's get a, you know, the psychiatrist to say that he's, you know, he's clear of drugs because Newman used, was really sharp. He said, "I'm not sure he's over this drug dependency that he's got." His drug addiction, that was one of the major things. And Dick was saying, "Well, we're gonna go get an expert who's gonna say he's had the treatment, he's good, he's no longer an addict."

[00:09:12] **Liz Farrell:** So going back to what Mandy said, so the original motion to reconsider a modified bond read to you like whining because it was basically like, we don't like this. Change it.

[00:09:23] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. And they didn't really say why he deserves his bond to be changed.



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[00:09:28] **Eric Bland:** Well, it's because he's different.

[00:09:28] **Mandy Matney:** It was just, I want to go to my kid's football game.

[00:09:30] **Eric Bland:** I'm not a normal criminal. But the feds were completely caught off guard because —

[00:09:38] **Liz Farrell:** Well, don't say it yet. So there's the, we go into this hearing, right? None of us are there. But there is high drama going into it because of the motions, because of the memos, it got a little ugly, right? We can say that.

[00:09:52] **Eric Bland:** Oh, yeah.

[00:09:52] **Liz Farrell:** Between the federal government and, so we all assumed Russell would be getting this like sweet plea deal. And then that would be the end of talking about federal court.

[00:10:01] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. Bart's definitely been operating under a high state of agitation, and he's not a lawyer that does that. He's not a high drama lawyer. He's not a lawyer that shows emotion. He's a lawyer that's very measured. But you could tell even after our original bond hearing, when we were outside on Broad Street and we were talking to one of the reporters and he walked by with his mirror shades on and he cut me a glance, like you knew he's upset. And he's been saying all along, this has been fueled by the plaintiff lawyers. Plaintiff lawyers. Like somehow, we caused his client to steal money or loan money or do whatever he is charged with.

[00:10:42] **Liz Farrell:** No, you're just messing up his game. So let's talk a little bit about the players, right? So Bart Daniel is another one of the titans in South Carolina.

[00:10:50] **Eric Bland:** Oh, he is. He is.

[00:10:50] **Liz Farrell:** He was a, you wanna give like a little bit of his history and like what you know about him?



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[00:10:54] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. He was an Assistant US Attorney. He's a hardcore Republican. You know, he's obviously Lindsey Graham's attorney in the grand jury investigation that's going on in Atlanta over the election stuff. So he's a serious contender. He was considered for the impeachment. He was gonna be one of Trump's attorneys for the impeachment. He was under consideration.

[00:11:16] **Liz Farrell:** It seems like a lot of South Carolina attorneys, we have Debbie Barbier.

[00:11:19] **Mandy Matney:** Were involved with that, yeah.

[00:11:20] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, and Rich Bowers. All involved with the Murdaugh case also.

[00:11:24] **Eric Bland:** So in the eighties, he was an Assistant US Attorney. And when we had the scandal with the legislature —

[00:11:33] **Liz Farrell:** That was the drug trafficking —

[00:11:34] **Mandy Matney:** "Operation Lost Trust."

[00:11:35] **Eric Bland:** The "Lost Trust," sorry.

[00:11:36] **Mandy Matney:** So wasn't he in "Jackpot?" Wasn't he?

[00:11:37] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. 1982.

[00:11:38] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah.

[00:11:39] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. He was that. And he did, he cut his bone, cut his teeth on that. And then he further solidified his reputation where he took down all these legislators who jeopardized their career and their reputations for hundred-dollar bribes, two-hundred-dollar bribes.

[00:11:52] **Liz Farrell:** Times are tough, Eric. So with Bart, why would you hire Bart? Now, who hires Bart these days?



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[00:11:59] **Eric Bland:** He doesn't really do the blue-collar murder crime like Jack Swerling does or Dick does. He —

[00:12:05] **Liz Farrell:** Did you say blue-collar murder crime? What's that?

[00:12:08] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. It's the people that would do drug crimes or you go in and you rob a store. Yeah, he's the white-collar criminal.

[00:12:16] **Liz Farrell:** Okay.

[00:12:17] **Eric Bland:** The company that commits tax fraud or, you know, the person who's insider trading and gets charged. You know, the kind of crimes where you don't get your hands dirty, where you come home at night and your suitcases are full of cash. That's the kind of people he represents.

[00:12:33] **Liz Farrell:** Okay, so he's, it's basically federal cases.

[00:12:36] **Mandy Matney:** Rich people, it sounds like.

[00:12:38] **Liz Farrell:** Very rich people.

[00:12:38] **Eric Bland:** He's got people who have rich man problems.

[00:12:40] **Liz Farrell:** Right. So these are guys that when they get their target letter from the FBI or the Department of Justice or however it works, they're probably gonna call a Bart Daniel.

[00:12:48] **Eric Bland:** And why are they gonna do that? You tell me.

[00:12:50] **Mandy Matney:** Because he used to be a US attorney.

[00:12:53] **Liz Farrell:** So let's just get to the point of what Eric's trying say here.

[00:12:56] **Eric Bland:** That whole thing of switching sides is really interesting to me. And I find it interesting because when I sue lawyers, it's like the client and the lawyer, they merge. And the lawyer who was representing my client,



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who I'm suing now for legal malpractice, he loved my client's case when he wanted to bring it. Until he screwed it up. Now, he's on the other side of the courtroom and all of a sudden, oh, that case was worthless. And I say, "Worthless? You were willing to take on a contingency. You were willing to give all your time. Now, all of a sudden, it's worthless." I find the same thing with prosecutors. I mean, they're zealous and they're doing the job of the law and they're putting bad guys away. They're putting bad guys away. And then all of a sudden, they announce their retirement, and they walk to the other side of the street. Now, they're representing the bad guy.

[00:13:44] **Liz Farrell:** Right. Because now they need to get that money. It's probably hard to —

[00:13:47] **Eric Bland:** It kind of fits into the stereotype that lawyers don't really have loyalties, you know? That they, if you pay me, I'll say. You pay, I'll say. That's really what it looks like. I mean, I'm gonna be honest.

[00:13:58] **Liz Farrell:** So as far as conviction, you know, I guess we're not even looking for that here but. So Bart Daniel is who Russell Laffitte hired to, and I think —

[00:14:07] **Eric Bland:** It's a good hire.

[00:14:07] **Liz Farrell:** — fairly early on in all of this. So going into, so now we know who Bart is and we know who Matt. So Matt is at the table, too, with Russell and Bart.

[00:14:16] **Eric Bland:** Right.

[00:14:17] **Liz Farrell:** So now, we're on September 6th, Tuesday, September 6th. Dramatic day. And again, I think it bears repeating that when the feds come for you and they indict you —

[00:14:27] **Eric Bland:** They come. They come heavy.

[00:14:29] **Liz Farrell:** — it's as good as "you did it," basically. Right? Like they have the goods —



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[00:14:34] **Eric Bland:** Yeah.

[00:14:35] **Liz Farrell:** — is what they're saying.

[00:14:35] **Eric Bland:** Junior Soprano said to Tony, "The next time you come, come heavy. They come heavy."

[00:14:39] **Liz Farrell:** Okay. So when we're at this point, there's some conclusions you can sort of draw, which is that they think they have the goods.

[00:14:46] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. If you look at the conviction rate on the federal court, it's almost like 99%. And what they do is they put you in a situation that you almost have to plead. Because in state court, Alex is an unusual case where they bring so many charges. In state court, there's usually one or two charges. Federal court, they bring like 22 charges. And if you get convicted on one of those counts, it's like eight years. And we will be right back.

[00:15:25] **Liz Farrell:** So now, also talk about Susie. So having Susie Laffitte speak after Russell is on the stand for two and a half hours, now you have her doing a 15-page, you know, speech to the courtroom, to the ladies and gentlemen of the courtroom.

[00:15:38] **Eric Bland:** Judge Gergel's gonna have read that transcript.

[00:15:42] **Liz Farrell:** Right. And Judge Gergel's who's probably going to preside over this. Or do we know he is presiding over this?

[00:15:47] **Eric Bland:** He is presiding.

[00:15:47] **Liz Farrell:** Okay.

[00:15:47] **Eric Bland:** And Judge Gergel is a tremendous judge. He's a fair judge, but he's —

[00:15:53] **Liz Farrell:** Great reputation.



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[00:15:54] **Eric Bland:** — but he's human.

[00:15:55] **Liz Farrell:** Sure.

[00:15:55] **Eric Bland:** Judges are human. And things soak into you. And Richard Gergel is not a judge that likes people who are privileged and try to separate themselves from the rank and file.

[00:16:07] **Liz Farrell:** Now, why would he read that transcript? Like what, what is a judge, is that how they prepare for the case? Or they just have to —

[00:16:13] **Eric Bland:** They're gonna look at the record. It's part of the record. And they're gonna read everything and he's gonna wanna learn if he's presiding over the trial. He's gonna wanna learn and he's gonna have law clerks that are gonna consume that entire file. And judges are human. What Richard Gergel doesn't like is two systems of justice. And what I'm starting to feel like in this Laffitte case is that big Russ needs to be treated differently than everybody else. And his wife got up and almost was talking down to all of us. Can't you see the greatness in my husband? Is this how you should treat greatness?

[00:16:54] **Liz Farrell:** Right. Yes. Is this how you should treat greatness? That's exactly it.

[00:16:58] **Mandy Matney:** He doesn't deserve the —

[00:16:59] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. But I think in reading the transcript, you know, obviously, different things strike different people differently. For Mandy and me though, a lot of our conversations in the past few days have been centered around that ecosystem in Hampton County and sort of like you're in high school, like your world. When you're in high school, your world is so small and contained to high school, right? So problems that now that you're an adult that you had in high school are very small and, you know, but when you're in high school, you think, oh my god, that's just the biggest thing ever.

[00:17:30] **Eric Bland:** Right.



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[00:17:31] **Liz Farrell:** So I think there's sort of an insularity here where Susie and Russell have their world. It's tiny.

[00:17:38] **Eric Bland:** It's not the real world, huh?

[00:17:40] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, it's very, she used the word "disturbing" when describing missing football games, missing his son's football games. That was my biggest takeaway that she did not realize like the seriousness and the totality of the crimes that her husband is accused of being involved in.

[00:18:01] **Liz Farrell:** Talk about the tone a little, like when you're reading out what you thought about how she sounded and maybe like, like how did she start it, how —

[00:18:08] **Mandy Matney:** She started it with something like "ladies and gentlemen of the courtroom," which I thought was very —

[00:18:14] **Eric Bland:** Scripted.

[00:18:15] **Mandy Matney:** — strange and we, I just, the whole thing was to get sympathy, but it —

[00:18:20] **Eric Bland:** Came across as arrogant.

[00:18:21] **Mandy Matney:** Extremely arrogant and out of touch.

[00:18:24] **Eric Bland:** No question.

[00:18:25] **Mandy Matney:** Because this entire thing is, what we're dealing with is people who are very vulnerable in way worse positions than the Laffittes are in right now.

[00:18:35] **Eric Bland:** People who are so vulnerable that, you know, people that lost a mother. People that lost a brother. They're in a fog, you know? How am I gonna get on with my life? Can you imagine the Plyler girls? It's not that they were, these are financial crimes. The financial crimes happen as a result of tragedy.



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[00:18:55] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, of like high trauma.

[00:18:56] **Eric Bland:** High trauma.

[00:19:04] **Mandy Matney:** I was surprised that his wife Susie spoke. That was one of the details that stuck out to me. I think it went on for three hours.

[00:19:14] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah.

[00:19:15] **Mandy Matney:** Which, that was surprising.

[00:19:16] **Liz Farrell:** It was like —

[00:19:17] **Mandy Matney:** I was like —

[00:19:17] **Liz Farrell:** What is happening here?

[00:19:19] **Mandy Matney:** What is going on? 'Cause again, these are usually in and out very quick. And then to find out that Russ testified for as long as he did, not just —

[00:19:31] **Eric Bland:** No, for him to even open his mouth is stunning.

[00:19:34] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah.

[00:19:34] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. And we'll talk about that in a second. So and then the big thing for like a couple of, or two major things for me was the double-wide trailer that his wife said.

[00:19:43] **Mandy Matney:** Yes.

[00:19:44] **Liz Farrell:** And then there was the tax he had not filed, he had not reported some of the fees that he had received for these conservatorship-slash-personal representative —



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[00:19:52] **Eric Bland:** Oh, yes, he did. He reported them. No, no, no, no, no. He did. It's all good.

[00:19:56] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. Yeah. You sound like him now. He had not reported them.

[00:19:59] **Eric Bland:** He had not.

[00:20:00] **Liz Farrell:** Prior to a certain point in time in 2021.

[00:20:02] **Eric Bland:** By the way, these taxable years were 2012, 13, and 14. Okay. He just happened to forget income that was three times more than what your W-2 income was.

[00:20:15] **Liz Farrell:** Right, right. So we knew from the stories that, obviously, this was a lot more than we had bargained. And the end result was that he just had his house arrest lifted. So he's allowed to travel now in Allendale and Hampton County. That was not what the defense wanted, obviously. But now, Eric, you ordered the transcript as you would often do, I guess, in a situation like this because it pertains to your case.

[00:20:41] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, because it pertained to my case. I probably wouldn't have, Liz, until I heard that he was testifying. Because when a defendant opens his mouth, it's called an admission by a party opponent. So if I'm being charged of a crime or I'm a defendant in a case, the only person I can talk to in a privileged capacity is my lawyer, my priest, and, in certain situations, my wife. Not my children, certainly not my friends, certainly not the media. And so, when a defendant opens his mouth under oath, that is testimony that can be used against him to impeach him. And we'll be right back.

[00:21:36] **Liz Farrell:** So we've got the scene set. We got the tone. We got all of that. Now, talk about what people were saying about Bart. Are you allowed to talk about what people are saying about Bart Daniel for putting him up on the stand?



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[00:21:48] **Eric Bland:** Well, let me not put it in, you can talk about Bart, I'll just put it in, if a lawyer puts his client on the stand and in direct examination has his client testify as to all of the criminal charges and why did you do what you did is unheard of. It's never done because you don't have to prove anything as a defendant. It's the government's burden of proof. And they just gave a roadmap to the prosecution on what their defense is.

[00:22:26] **Liz Farrell:** Right. Which is what, now?

[00:22:28] **Eric Bland:** Now, their defense is, I'm a victim. Bart Daniel said he breached his fiduciary duties. He was grossly negligent, and possibly grossly negligent, but not criminal.

[00:22:40] **Liz Farrell:** So how many times have you seen this happen before where the defense puts their guy on the stand during a bond reconsideration hearing?

[00:22:48] **Eric Bland:** I'm telling you it's less than probably, there's been a statistic, the ABA did it one time that said 4%, I think it's even less, probably 2% of the time that a defendant will actually get on the stand and testify in their own defense. They do it if it's a self-defense type of case or stand your ground, something where you admit, I did shoot somebody or I did do it, but here's why.

[00:23:15] **Liz Farrell:** Which I guess they kind of are. They're saying he did do these things. He just doesn't think they're crimes in Russell Laffitte world .

[00:23:20] **Eric Bland:** No. But what he did though is Bart Daniel walked him directly into civil judgments with what he did, with what he said and what he had him testify to. Remember: this is a bond hearing, Liz and Mandy. This wasn't a trial.

[00:23:34] **Eric Bland:** And so, all he was trying to do was show I'm not a danger to the community and a flight risk. Now, if his trial was five years from now, maybe you can justify the loosening of the restraints and put him up. But you didn't have to put him up to show that he wasn't a flight risk or a danger to the community. His wife could have done it. His children could have done it. But to put him up, you waive your privilege against self-incrimination.



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You waive the attorney-client privilege because he said that Alex was his attorney. And now, he gets into his discussions with Alex. So when you decide you're gonna put your client up in a criminal case, it's a risk-benefit analysis. Is the juice worth the squeeze? His trial is in November 8th. So to take this kind of risk and waive all these privileges and give a roadmap to the prosecution, to the federal government, of what your case, your defense is for six weeks of being able to travel in Allendale and Hampton, somebody made a bad decision.

[00:24:44] **Liz Farrell:** So yeah, in summary, so like when we're talking about like the reason we were there, we're literally there so that he can have one of his ankle monitors taken off so that he can go to football games for the-six week duration between now, or maybe the two-month duration between September 6th and November 8th.

[00:25:01] **Eric Bland:** He needs to sell concessions, you know? Don't forget, too.

[00:25:03] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah.

[00:25:04] **Mandy Matney:** Yes. Yeah. Football was brought up like 17 times in the —

[00:25:08] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, that really seemed to be the —

[00:25:11] **Eric Bland:** Small town, I mean.

[00:25:11] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, exactly. Which reminded me of my school.

[00:25:14] **Liz Farrell:** Absolutely.

[00:25:15] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. And again, I just don't think that his attorneys are understanding what normal people go through. And the entire time I was reading all of Russell's struggles with his ankle monitors, I was just thinking in my head, well, that's a lot better than jail.



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[00:25:31] **Eric Bland:** That's, I get it that he's under house arrest. That's an inconvenience. That's not sitting in jail. It's not the same thing. Well, he was under house arrest. There's people who are sitting in jail. He gets to go out and cook on his grill and eat filet mignon if somebody's gonna go to the store and pick up the steak for him.

[00:25:49] **Liz Farrell:** Right. And outside the —

[00:25:50] **Eric Bland:** It's not the same, Liz,

[00:25:51] **Liz Farrell:** — alleged double wide, yeah.

[00:25:52] **Liz Farrell:** So now, we're talking about going to trial. So the trial right now is set for November 8th. I personally don't think we're gonna see a trial.

[00:26:00] **Eric Bland:** I agree.

[00:26:01] **Liz Farrell:** I think all of this is a lead up to, it seems like a kind of a game of chicken in that the defense is daring the prosecution to bring their case to trial and the prosecution is taking them up on their bluff. Or maybe, you know, I'm not sure who's bluffing. Maybe no one, maybe both.

[00:26:15] **Eric Bland:** Well, you know, there was an attorney in the upstate that was, I gave an interview and he was the counterpoint to me, and he said, "Well, you know, the defense wants to go to trial as quick as possible because they don't want the prosecution to be adequately prepared." And then he said, "Well, the prosecution wants to go as fast as they can to trial because they don't want defense to be prepared." Well, at that point, if everybody's going to trial so fast, then no one's gonna be prepared. That's not justice.

[00:26:43] **Liz Farrell:** No.

[00:26:44] **Eric Bland:** You know? Yes. We want speedy trial. There is the speedy trial rule, and people shouldn't languish with charges over their head because we're innocent to be proven guilty. But when you rush justice, you don't get full cup.



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[00:26:58] **Liz Farrell:** Right.

[00:26:59] **Eric Bland:** We cannot rush justice. It's something that has to happen organically because different things happen along the way. Different things are gonna be revealed. What if somebody starts to cooperate? What if you try Russ too quickly and Alex decides he would've cooperated? Or Cory Fleming would've decided, I'm gonna cooperate. So all these cases are intertwined, and if we're rushing them, we're losing the opportunity where people can cooperate and it would change the dynamic of the case.

[00:27:31] **Mandy Matney:** And what they don't understand is Russell Laffitte having two ankle monitors that tangle him up at night or whatever she said. I'm sorry, it's funny.

[00:27:42] **Liz Farrell:** I think it's funny.

[00:27:44] **Eric Bland:** It's tough to take a bath. You plug him in, you're wet, you know, God forbid, you're getting shocked.

[00:27:50] **Liz Farrell:** Well, you know, I Googled that and you actually can take a shower with them on. 'Cause I was like, I wanna know what it's like for Russell Laffitte.

[00:27:56] **Eric Bland:** Not plug in though, Liz.

[00:27:57] **Liz Farrell:** Certainly can't plug him in. But Russell's a giant man. He's a six-six or six-seven. He's like that. So, you know, the idea that he has to charge himself a couple hours a day, according to his testimony. You know, there's a certain amount of pleasure, I guess, that the world can take in that. But yeah, going back to the tone, these are people who maybe aren't used to consequence or account, you know, being, having to have any sort of inconvenience.

[00:28:21] **Mandy Matney:** I don't think —

[00:28:22] **Eric Bland:** What about the guy that's sitting in jail that can't make his bond? I'm not talking about Alex, but the normal people that aren't



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getting their cases to trial in November 8th. They get their, this guy was charged in May or July federally. And now, he's getting a trial in November. Alex is charged with murder in June. He's getting his trial potentially in January. What about these people who were sitting in jail who've committed —

[00:28:47] **Liz Farrell:** They can't afford justice, Eric. They can't afford it. They need a coupon, some sort of voucher.

[00:28:53] **Eric Bland:** No, that's not justice that they can't afford. They can't afford to be —

[00:28:56] **Liz Farrell:** These guys are paying for this justice right now.

[00:28:58] **Eric Bland:** That's not the definition of what justice should be. Deuteronomy said "tzedek, tzedek, tirdof," which is Hebrew for "justice, justice, shalt thou pursue." These, we're not, these prosecutors aren't pursuing justice for all these other people sitting in jail. They're pursuing it against the people that they want to pursue it against.

[00:29:18] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah.

[00:29:26] **Mandy Matney:** The Murdaugh Murders Podcast is created by me, Mandy Matney, and my fiancé, David Moses. Our executive editor is Liz Farrell.

[00:29:35] **Outro:** Produced by Luna Shark Productions.