



EPISODE 28: Murderer on the Lam: It's One Major Mess After Another in South Carolina

[00:00:00] **Liz Farrell:** Cups up, everyone.

[00:00:10] **Eric Bland:** Cups up. Well, how are you guys doing?

[00:00:13] **Liz Farrell:** Good question because this has been a really crazy week. Jeroid Price, so he's still at large, right?

[00:00:19] **Eric Bland:** Yes, he is. Todd claimed yesterday that he hadn't spoken to him in — I think it was Monday was the last time he spoke to him. He didn't speak to him after the Supreme Court argument and assuming right now he is on the lam, as they say.

[00:00:36] **Liz Farrell:** What a surprise, right? I mean, Mandy, you look surprised.

[00:00:38] **Mandy Matney:** Who called it?

[00:00:43] **Eric Bland:** She also said something neat. Mandy said, you know, why are we paying for the reward for Jeroid Price when, you know, we're not the ones that let him go?

[00:00:54] **Mandy Matney:** Right.

[00:00:54] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah.

[00:00:55] **Mandy Matney:** So I guess this could lead us into a couple other things. Something that's really bothered me — someone on Twitter was messaging me the other day and saying this seems so wrong because after the Supreme Court hearing, we are not only — we're just punishing Jeroid and no one else. Like it just seems very backwards. It seems, again, like cutting off a branch of the tree, and the whole tree's corrupt and we're not fixing the problem. And still, like Jeroid's long gone. We're not — they're probably not gonna find him. Like let's be real about that. But the question is whose liability is it? Whose fault is it? And will they be held accountable?



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Because this is really bad. I mean, in a way it's kind of like just like a guard like opening up a prisoner's door and letting them out. And then, what always happens to the guard? We've seen those stories before. They always end up getting going to jail and whatnot. Like this is just really, really, really, really wrong.

[00:02:00] **Eric Bland:** But I think accountability's gonna come, Mandy. I think sometimes it's not as rapid as we want, but I think Judge Manning unfortunately his legacy is going to be tarnished. I also think that over time, you know, Todd Rutherford may feel a little bit of the backlash from some of the judges. It may affect whether he's gonna be retained on certain cases. We won't know that. And certainly, the voters will have an opportunity to pass judgment on Byron Gipson at the next election cycle. So accountability comes. It doesn't come sometime as fast as we would want it. But I think Judge Manning, wherever he is right now, is probably a little shell-shocked how this happened around him and he wasn't here to either make a public statement or hire a lawyer to make a statement for him. And I feel bad for him for that because he did give 30 years of his time to the state. And, you know, we're always judged by our last act in life. That's just the way it is. You know, Liz?

[00:03:03] **Liz Farrell:** So why do you say he wasn't here? Wasn't that by choice?

[00:03:07] **Eric Bland:** I think he either is visiting usually his children out West. I know he expressed he wanted to go move to Phoenix, Arizona. So when I say not here, meaning not in the news or on camera. I don't know where he was.

[00:03:23] **Liz Farrell:** So one of the things I wanna talk about with Jeroid Price and that case and sort of how this all materialized, I think you're right, Eric. I do think that we will see consequence at some point. But it's not enough. The voters, yes — we absolutely do hold people accountable for what they've done in office, but it's too slow. And dare I say, I think that a special prosecutor should be appointed to look into this — kind of the way it was with the Quinn case, which interestingly enough this week, the last defendants in the Quinn case were sentenced by Judge Carmen Mullen. It was a pretty tough sentencing. One of them was given a choice between six months in prison or paying a fine of \$500, which I think you guys know which one he chose. The



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other one, I think he got a hundred hours of community service. And there was another one I think just a little bit ago and I think he just got 18 months of home confinement. So these are the types of punishments that they're getting.

[00:04:19] **Eric Bland:** For political corruption.

[00:04:21] **Liz Farrell:** For political corruption, correct. And I do think that we need to appoint a special prosecutor in this case and I think Attorney General Alan Wilson needs to take a very strong stand on this because the Quinn thing happened while he was in office and he was highly criticized for his handling of that and look at where we're at, you know? We can't keep saying like this is — we're making progress. Things are getting better. And I saw this on Twitter right before I got on here. Somebody posted that like the whole world is watching right now and this is how they're acting. Like this isn't even like them putting on their best outfit. Like they're just — they don't care. So something has to happen on a major level, I think.

[00:04:57] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, and I think — I mean, Eric, you have talked about how important momentum is and I know that these things take time. But at the same time, momentum is so crucial. And as the world is watching, we just need assurance that the people in charge of holding those accountable for wrongdoing among elected officials are doing their jobs. And I feel like we have — we've seen enough in the last few years so that like the government doesn't get the benefit of the doubt anymore. There are so many people at this point that it's like, okay, you let that slide. You let that slide. We're still waiting on that investigation. We're still waiting on that investigation. It just seems like they're just pushing it under the rug versus actually dealing with it and holding people accountable. And again, I just think back of like so many times that I have read police reports of people doing a whole lot less and getting immediately arrested — people with a lot less power and with the consequences of their actions being minimum to nothing. And this is really, really bad as far as the potential consequences.

[00:06:16] **Eric Bland:** Well, we'll see quickly. You know, if you listen to the Supreme Court oral arguments, which I found were so fascinating and we'll get into them. It was — if you're a wonk, a legal wonk like I am and really enjoy good lawyering, it was really good lawyering and good robust questions by



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the judges. The judges were almost telling the legislature, "Clean this up. If you don't want a murderer to get some kind of concession off a sentence, clean it up." And I almost thought that I would see some kind of bill introduced Thursday morning by somebody in the House or Senate, you know, trying to make sure that this doesn't happen again. And I'm hopeful it comes this week so that we don't have this kind of situation again that if there is gonna be any time where somebody is a convicted felon and they're gonna give post-convicted cooperation that there are certain prophylactic measures that have to take place. Number one: no secret hearings, no secret orders. AG has to be notified. Bureau of Prison Department of Corrections has to be notified — something where this doesn't have to will never happen again. Don't you guys agree?

[00:07:30] **Liz Farrell:** I do agree, but, you know, I'm probably the conspiracy theorist here right now, which typically I'm not. I think that the whole point of this was to create a precedent that would allow somebody who could get out on a murder charge so that a murder charge doesn't necessarily put you away for life or for most of your life.

[00:07:51] **Eric Bland:** Do those initials say AM? Is that what you're saying?

[00:07:55] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. Sometimes there's an R in front of it. I just think it's — I think the timing of it is strange. I really do. And I think that picking Jeroid Price is almost like picking a guinea pig for an experiment because he didn't do anything great in prison. And in fact, he did the opposite. Beyond the nature of that order and all the attachments to it were so scattershot. There was no consistency to it. There was no — literally, you have three different people saying three different reasons why this guy's should get out early.

[00:08:27] **Eric Bland:** And he hasn't done anything since 2017 when he let — when he helped with Jimmy Causey so.

[00:08:32] **Liz Farrell:** Allegedly helped with Jimmy Causey.

[00:08:34] **Eric Bland:** Why did it take six years to do this, right?

[00:08:37] **Liz Farrell:** Right. So why do they then — they have this order, right, in December, and then they sit on it for three — they sit on it until the week



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after Alex Murdaugh is sentenced to two life terms in prison, and then he's released. And, you know, what happened in the Supreme Court during the oral arguments that was not setting precedent or not, you know, that wasn't about the precedent. That was simply about the procedure. This wasn't done correctly according to the law. It was about the process. So did you guys think that Todd Rutherford — I mean, I know he's not — he says he's not hired by Price right now. He's not representing Price right now. But do you think that they could come back and try this again? Granted, he's out of, you know, he's on the lam. But do you think that would've been the next step had he turned himself in?

[00:09:21] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, that he'd give it a redo. Probably. Probably.

[00:09:26] **Liz Farrell:** With a straight face.

[00:09:27] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. I think that they would. I think he would do it again. But, you know, it was procedurally defective. Not they didn't pass judge on the merits of letting a murderer, you know, commute a 35-year sentence to 19. They reversed it based on procedural mistakes.

[00:09:44] **Mandy Matney:** So right now, I guess Todd Rutherford just had a press conference this afternoon, urging Price to turn himself in.

[00:09:54] **Liz Farrell:** Is that right? What? Oh my God, guys. Like, I mean, we — I think it's just. There's a little bit of vindication this past week again. Like every time I think that like what we're seeing, like are we making too much out of it or are we seeing, you know, something behind every bush when there isn't? And it's just like it just proves that we're not the crazy ones. So I don't know at what point I start to believe that.

[00:10:22] **Eric Bland:** Well, let me ask this question. What does Todd think? I mean, Todd said on Wednesday to the Supreme Court, well, if you bring him back and you put him back in prison, it's a death sentence. Well, what did he think's gonna happen when he's out and he has to explain to whoever his compatriots are or people find out he had a 35-year sentence and he's out in 19 years, isn't somebody gonna ask questions on the outside like, "Hey, Jeroid. How did you get out on a murder charge when it's day for day?" Isn't he —



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doesn't he have the same threat on his life that way that he did if he has to go back to prison? I mean, it didn't make sense to me.

[00:10:59] **Liz Farrell:** You're saying that somebody would be like how did you get special treatment?

[00:11:03] **Eric Bland:** Right.

[00:11:05] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, maybe. I mean, I think more than that, after Byron Gipson put out that this guy gave information on the Bloods, that would cause a little bit of problems. I mean, I would think that would cause some problems for him more than anything else. But I'll be interested to see if he leaves the country because he's been in prison. So, I mean, what — does he have a passport? Like what how's he — where can he go, you know?

[00:11:28] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And are those pictures that we're seeing of him from like before he was in prison? Does anybody know that?

[00:11:37] **Eric Bland:** What, the ones where he's smiling in the yellow suit?

[00:11:40] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. Or not the yellow suit.

[00:11:42] **Liz Farrell:** No, he's wearing like a hoodie.

[00:11:43] **Mandy Matney:** The ones where he's like, yeah, in a hoodie outside of a building. Like is that like the last couple weeks or is that 20 years ago?

[00:11:50] **Liz Farrell:** No, no, no. That's recent because he was 23 when he was put in prison.

[00:11:54] **Mandy Matney:** That's what I would think but.

[00:11:55] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. It's hard to tell because when you've been in prison for a while, I think you're afforded some opportunities like taking Christmas photos, you know, in the visitation room and such. So I didn't — I couldn't tell if he was outside or if he was just in some sort of industrial room. But yeah, that looked like he was he's already like. Look. Unless he rush ordered a



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passport, he doesn't have one or he has a fake one. So he's going to be somewhere in this country. And I think, you know, maybe he'll be caught.

[00:12:28] The \$5,000 thing though, what did you guys think about the victim's family standing behind Sheriff Leon Lott in a press conference, talking about the reward that's being offered? It kind of left a bad taste in my mouth because this is not the Smalls family's problem. And they shouldn't be used as some sort of mechanism to clean up the mess that the state made, you know?

[00:12:48] **Mandy Matney:** It's also not the Richland County taxpayers' problem. Like that just really made me angry and I applaud Leon Lott for saying something and doing something about this. But at the same time, again, accountability really, really, really matters here. And just having the taxpayers try to clean up the mess by offering a reward from taxpayer money, it's just it's not right. This is their fault and this should not have happened to begin with, and that's what everyone needs to focus on.

[00:13:22] **Eric Bland:** This isn't at Sheriff Lott's feet though. I will tell you. He's a wonderful sheriff and he has spent his entire career gangbusting. It's what he ran on and what he has done and so much of what has taken place in Richland County we don't even know about. But he is really — there was a time a couple years ago where we were having trouble keeping police chiefs in the City of Columbia and they were actually saying turn over the police department to Sheriff Lott, not only the county sheriff's department, but the city police department. He's that good and that serious about getting rid of gangs. So I know he's mad as all — that this happened.

[00:14:04] **Liz Farrell:** Oh, for sure. Do you think \$5,000 though is enough for somebody to give information on somebody like Jeroid Price?

[00:14:12] **Eric Bland:** No way.

[00:14:14] **Liz Farrell:** What would be your price? How much? It's kind of funny, by the way, and I don't I haven't brought this up yet, but his last name is Price and sort of like, you know, price to pay. Yeah. Then like, what was the — yeah, exactly. The price was right. Like what — he basically, you know, presumably bought his way out of prison. And I'm not talking about bribes, people. I'm



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talking about the money that Todd Rutherford presumably would've been paid for this. But what would be your price, Eric, to give information on where Jeroid Price was?

[00:14:45] **Eric Bland:** There could — I wouldn't put myself at risk that way.

[00:14:49] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. Mandy?

[00:14:51] **Mandy Matney:** Well, it just depends because, you know, \$5,000 to some people is a lot more money than it is to other people like. So \$5,000 might really change someone's life. But at the same time, when you're risking your life and your family's lives. And I'm sure everyone realizes that in this situation, it needs to be more. And it's just, again, but it should not be paid for by the taxpayers.

[00:15:23] **Eric Bland:** So who should put it up?

[00:15:25] **Liz Farrell:** Todd.

[00:15:26] **Mandy Matney:** I think Todd. I think Byron Gipson and Judge Manning.

[00:15:31] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, I think that would be — and I think they — honestly, like if we're gonna charge people for hiring cops to, you know, handle a block party like stand guard at a block party, then maybe we should charge Todd Rutherford, Byron Gipson, and Judge Casey Manning for the time that law enforcement is spending on cleaning up this mess of theirs.

[00:15:55] **Mandy Matney:** Right.

[00:15:55] **Eric Bland:** Let's wait till we hear from Casey Manning first. We've already heard from Todd Rutherford and we've already heard from Byron Gipson, so I don't fault you for that. But I want to hear from Judge Manning.

[00:16:07] **Liz Farrell:** I feel like we did hear from him. And I'll tell you this, Eric. In the — I think the order stands for itself. I think the order that is a flimsy order attached to an addendum that does not match up with the two



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affidavits. I've heard from Casey Manning. And that's — I know I don't know him personally the way you do so, and I obviously I don't think I could speak to his scope of work because I would say that his name came on my radar in relation to the Murdaugh case so. But from my perspective, I feel like I've heard enough from him. I don't know that there's anything he could say right now that wouldn't make me think that it was either, you know, as they say, corruption or incompetence, and neither one looks good. So he can say that Todd lied to him. He can say that Byron lied to him. But at the end of the day, you signed an order based on two affidavits that don't even match up to your addendum that explain what your the basis for your decision was. So that I don't understand. Plus, you sealed the order, which is not something that I would hope most judges would do in a criminal case like this.

[00:17:06] **Mandy Matney:** And it's about a convicted murderer and a very dangerous inmate. Like it this isn't somebody signing to get like if somebody just happened to be in jail for weed for 20 years and, you know, there is a —

[00:17:21] **Eric Bland:** Restructure out, right?

[00:17:23] **Mandy Matney:** Right, or something like that. Like that could be understandable. But if it's if you're dealing with a murderer and if you're dealing with somebody who has the potential to be very, very dangerous toward the society that you protect and for toward the society that for the people that you are in charge of protecting, there's no excuses. You should read every addendum. You should read you should thoroughly understand what's going on. And there are major, major problems that anyone with any basic common sense reading that should have been able to flag. And so I have an issue with giving Judge Manning the benefit of the doubt at this point because I think that if there were something for him to say, he would've said it by now. And the more time that passes and the more silent that he is, the the worse it gets.

[00:18:20] **Eric Bland:** I will agree on that.

[00:18:23] **Mandy Matney:** We'll be right back.

[00:18:30] **Liz Farrell:** Let's talk about the Supreme Court though. I wanna start with Todd Rutherford. Do you think that he made a convincing



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argument, given that there was a three-two split? I mean, it wasn't unanimous. The Supreme Court didn't come back and say, "We all agree that you screwed up; that this was a mess up; and that like this is a big problem." Only three of the justices agreed with that — agreed with the state, luckily. But do you think that the arguments that Todd made in front of the Supreme Court — first of all, I thought he was incredibly smart and I really, like you said, Eric, I mean, it was so easy to get so nerdy in that just because you're trying to find — like you could just see the justices trying to find their way in to how is this gonna be our problem to fix? Like what makes this our problem? What is the jurisdiction there? And it felt like at a certain point, I think it was Justice James who was trying to say that it was the state's problem, meaning not just the state, but Alan Wilson's problem; that at the end of the day, Alan Wilson was responsible for this. What were your thoughts just in general on what on how Todd did and what his main argument was?

[00:19:35] **Eric Bland:** I thought he was extremely good at advocacy, and I did not expect him to be that good. I also didn't expect the questions to be so robust from all of the justices. And if you remember, these appellate arguments are timed. Your arguments are either 15 or 30 minutes, and you have a green light, a yellow light, and a red light. And when that red light goes off, you stop. And these justices did not want to stop when the red light went off. And so that told me that this is such an important matter that they recognize not only from a legal standpoint do we have to get it legally right, but the public is watching and that our justice system is in jeopardy here. I saw it all hanging by a thread. It was something that I don't think we'll ever see again like that because usually, there's one or two justices that ask a lot of questions. John Few asks a lot of questions. I went to law school with him. Justice Kittredge is a guy that asks a lot of questions, but Justice Hill usually doesn't ask that much. And Justice Beatty doesn't ask that much and Justice Beatty asked a lot of questions. I thought Alan Wilson was really amazing. The alacrity, which he went from one statute to the other and he weaved them and he was able to say to the judge, "I disagree with you that it is not authority. It is a jurisdiction question." And he did it in a way not to offend. And, you know, we're seeing Alan Wilson lawyer lately. That would've been nice if we've seen this kind of lawyering from him during his tenure. It was just from a lawyer's standpoint, it was a Super Bowl of lawyering. That's all I'll say.

[00:21:22] **Liz Farrell:** I can totally — I totally agree with you. I could see that. Justice Beatty is the chief justice, so obviously not to say that his opinion is



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any more important, but certainly you would look to him to set the tone of what the court is thinking on this. Were you surprised that he seemed to be during his questioning and as it turned down in his vote siding with Todd Rutherford?

[00:21:47] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. I need to honestly watch more Supreme Court justice — that was the first one that I've watched within South Carolina, so I don't know how it usually is. But I did hear people that are more familiar with the process say that sometimes they do ask questions that are just trying to get things on the record and it sounds like they're against the person, but really they're just trying to get their questions on the record and get the person to say that. So it's a little confusing about how that works. But I wanna go back for a minute and say like we're all describing how it went and what went down, but what a day that was before everything happened.

[00:22:33] **Eric Bland:** Do you think they predetermined their decisions? Because usually, when you have oral argument, then you go back and a clerk will maybe write an opinion and then pass it around. And if there is somebody on the fence, you know, some justices will go lobby each other. And this seems such like so many different legal arguments that could either justify letting the sentence be reduced or legal arguments to go against it being reduced that I was surprised that the decision came down that fast. Like you asked me. I think it was David asked me and I said I think it'll probably be Friday because I really think that they wanted to go back, talk it over with their law clerks, maybe go back and talk it over as a group. But I think they made up their mind way before the oral arguments. What are your thoughts on that?

[00:23:29] **Mandy Matney:** On Wednesday morning or before that, the Supreme Court was not gonna allow broadcasting of this event. And I wanna talk about that because I think it's so important. Not only, well, like we're talking about everything that went down and a lot of people saw that process and how it worked, and I think that that's so incredibly important. The part that gave me really, really bad feelings about all of this was that somebody with power did not want us to see what was going on there.

[00:24:02] **Eric Bland:** They gave us video with no audio.



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[00:24:04] **Mandy Matney:** Well, for a minute. But even before that, they were saying it's not gonna be live-streamed. And then, I mean, they kept switching. David probably called them 10 times on Wednesday morning because initially, they were saying reporters can come, but they cannot record it. There will be no cell phones. And then, they said, WIS will be able to record it but nobody else. And then they said —

[00:24:30] **Eric Bland:** So what do you think happened?

[00:24:32] **Mandy Matney:** I think someone on the Supreme Court is trying to cover for somebody that is involved in all of this and they knew that the public — they knew that the entire world was watching and they did not want whoever they're covering for to be embarrassed.

[00:24:45] **Eric Bland:** How did it get flipped? Do you think the governor called and said no? Was it somebody from the governor's office said no, you gotta —

[00:24:51] **Liz Farrell:** "Do you think the governor called?" I'm sorry. Eric, you know who our governor is?

[00:24:58] **Eric Bland:** How did they reverse their decision? He did weigh in, by the way.

[00:25:01] **Mandy Matney:** He did. And I'll — we gotta give him credit.

[00:25:03] **Eric Bland:** Governor McMaster did weigh in and said he totally disagreed with it so.

[00:25:08] **Liz Farrell:** Oh, no. But about the, you mean about the allowing it to be live streamed or about just the — ?

[00:25:13] **Eric Bland:** I'm asking how did they change? Where did the impetus come from?



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[00:25:17] **Liz Farrell:** Oh, I think, I mean, I'm not — we made a fuss out of it on Twitter, and we put up Justice Beatty's phone number and apparently our listeners and our followers on social media.

[00:25:31] **Eric Bland:** Really? I didn't know that.

[00:25:34] **Liz Farrell:** Oh, yeah.

[00:25:34] **Mandy Matney:** It all happened very quickly.

[00:25:36] **Liz Farrell:** It did. It was not, you know, I think about this and I think about the person answering the phone and my apologies go to her because I know that that could not have been easy. But people said that she sounded frazzled because and I presume they were getting a bunch of phone calls after we tweeted that out, which I'm glad because I think that that just shows again that the public — first of all, the thing that we need to make clear. This isn't — we weren't asking them to do anything that they don't normally do. They live stream oral arguments, all of them, and they're available. I mean, it's excellent. I wanna give them credit for that. Their archives are beautiful and I've used them several times in my career to look up what happened in the course of certain cases. The fact that they decided not to do that at first with this case just goes back to what I was saying earlier, which is this is how they're behaving knowing that the world is watching. That you think that after the world watched Alex Murdaugh sit on that stand for two days and say Maggie and Paw-Paw and Roro, you think, and these are people —

[00:26:40] **Eric Bland:** Not Maggie — Mags.

[00:26:41] **Liz Farrell:** That's right. Mags. You think that they're gonna look away from South Carolina? Like they struck gold. Like people who are fans of this type of not just true crime, but like this is like a real-life television show that keeps throwing new twists into the plot. They're not gonna look away. And so the Jeroid Price case shows what we've been up against before the murders. And I think people are not — it doesn't matter if they live in California or Scotland or wherever. This is interesting to them. And I think — and I honestly, I do think it gives people the sort of the strength, I guess, or maybe the thought in their mind that they can do the same thing in their states or their hometowns. They can make these demands and see these see



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actual change happen. So in that half hour when they said that reporters could be there that they just couldn't record until they started, that was one of the most — that was the longest half hour, I think, of all of our lives because of the frenetic pace of it and trying to get — we, Mandy and I were texting each other and we're just like, let's hope that they change their minds because and they sure as heck did.

[00:27:55] **Eric Bland:** You guys are beating Eric Alan to death. You know, poor Eric Alan said, okay, I got my phone. I'm gonna keep it on until they tell me I can't keep it off, you know? It was amazing.

[00:28:06] **Liz Farrell:** I know. Thank God for Eric Alan though. Good Lord.

[00:28:11] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. I mean, well, woke up that morning and the other thing that convinced me that they were changing that they changed their process was on Tuesday, I checked the website and it had said next scheduled event, the Jeroid Price case at noon on Wednesday. And it said, "We will be broadcasting this." And then, woke up Wednesday morning and it's gone. And something does — it just did not sit right with me. And again, it's just so crazy when it's a case about transparency and it's a case that the problem is backroom deals and secret orders and things like that. That somebody in power is still trying to be sneaky about this. That's what — that was my takeaway, and I hope, I hope, I hope that it was no one on the Supreme Court. But somebody — I would love to know who made that decision and how that went down. And I'm not sure how to figure that out, but I really want to because that was really wrong and, again, it should not take that many people calling. It should not take the fact that we have — we are very blessed with a very active and a very pesky audience and a big one. We're very blessed with that. But like a lot of people don't have those situations. And instead of it getting to that point, maybe the government should have just done the right thing to begin with and said, we're gonna eat this one. Like we're gonna look bad, but we have to be transparent about it and we have to just continue with protocol and we can't just hide this because we don't want someone to look bad.

[00:29:53] **Eric Bland:** What would've happened if it was a three-two vote the other way? What do you think the reaction would've been? What would've really happened, Liz?



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[00:30:01] **Liz Farrell:** I think that there would've been an outcry. I think, Mandy, as you were talking, I was realizing that — I don't know if it's a realization that I'm just having now, but sort of putting it into words. So we come on board, right? And now, we have a platform where we can affect change in a very quick way it seems. But there's so many people in South Carolina who have witnessed what goes on and have tried in their way to fix it or bring attention to it or have, you know, just done the best that they can in the job that they're in but who can tell who know that this is wrong. And so I think that we have sort of jimmed the door open a little bit for people. So when we put that out there and say that this is happening, it might not, you know, it's nothing new to people in South Carolina, other lawyers, people who work in the legal community, just people who are interested citizens. So I think we're giving — I think that the fact that all of this is happening is giving people more a louder voice, hopefully, in getting the things done that they've seen for decades in many cases so.

[00:31:10] **Eric Bland:** I'm gonna posit something to you ladies. So like Roe v. Wade and the reversal of it, you can legally get there that it was not a constitutionally based decision in 1972. You can legally get there and you can legally make an argument that it's not a constitutional decision that should have been upheld. And they did that, and they saw the backlash — the real backlash in Wisconsin, in a Republican state across the midterms would happen. Was this decision more emotionally based or more legally based? Did this did the justices make a decision because the public outcry would've been so bad? Because legally, you can make a decision. You can say that there was a loophole here — that Price could have gotten this dispensation. So what I'm asking you is did the three justices look at this and say, man, if we make a legal decision here and we say it's okay for Jeroid Price, what is the public backlash? So I'm basically asking was this a public policy more than a legal decision is really what I'm trying to say.

[00:32:25] **Liz Farrell:** I think it goes back to what you were saying earlier. I do think that this was probably more of a policy and more of an emotional decision because with Rutherford, we could see — and that was kind of my fear in reading his response is that I thought he had some sound legal arguments. And the same thing, like I'm pro-choice, but I can understand legally how they were able to reverse Roe v. Wade. Like I understand that. But yeah, I do think so. And I think that that's exactly what they were telling us —



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that like give us — they're kind of — I can't remember if it was Justice Few or James. But one of them was basically — like, give us the vehicle to get there.

[00:33:09] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. He said we can't use equity to get there, which equity means fairness. That's what it means — just fairness. He said, "You gotta give me some kind of law that lets me do what I want to do. I don't want to do it based on fairness because that's not a legal reason." So I really, you know, as a lawyer in me, I want to make sure that they did it legally right. And both public policy and legally right, not just one over the other.

[00:33:38] **Liz Farrell:** But that I think it's the thing is is this is that — so we got the decision within a couple hours or was it less than a couple hours? I can't remember. But we got the decision the same afternoon. I think the idea that they should have taken longer with their decision because they didn't have any sort of backgrounds what they based their decision on, right? It was simply like this is how we decided and then we respectfully dissent. Had they done something that was more robust, that explained their thinking and how they got there, I think that that would've been much better. But I think also maybe that's just them not wanting to put on the record because it is such a touchy situation. But yeah, I think it was emotional.

[00:34:22] And then, I wanna mention one thing, too. So there was a point where Justice Beatty and Justice James were blaming Alan Wilson for this, like I said. And what was interesting to me is that Mandy was looking through Todd Rutherford's record in the legislature, and she found where he had introduced a sort of an amendment or some sort of revision or addition rather to the law in question here, which is the Substantial Assistance Law. As it stands, the solicitor has to make the motion to get it there, to get the circuit court judge to be able to make that decision to shorten the term of somebody's prison sentence. Todd was trying to get it so that the AG could also make a motion to get the circuit court judge to do that. So as it stands, I guess the AG's office can't do that technically, I suppose. So it was interesting to me that the Supreme Court judges were making an argument that this was on Alan.

[00:35:30] **Eric Bland:** How? Why would it be on him?



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[00:35:33] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. At the very same time that Todd's sitting there like not, I mean, he's not gonna offer this information but he was trying to get the law changed so that Alan could also participate in this in the future.

[00:35:45] **Eric Bland:** But you didn't notify him.

[00:35:47] **Liz Farrell:** Right.

[00:35:47] **Eric Bland:** They didn't notify him. I mean, how's it Alan's fault in December?

[00:35:52] **Liz Farrell:** They were saying that because Alan is technically he's a supervisor of all solicitors in the state, which —

[00:35:59] **Eric Bland:** He's the supervisor of the solicitors. So what happens when you have a rogue solicitor? Is that Alan's fault?

[00:36:05] **Liz Farrell:** Okay. So let's — yeah, let's talk about that, Mandy. Let's talk about that. Because you and I were like, oh, good. It's on the record because what about Duffie Stone? What are we gonna do about Duffie Stone, Alan Wilson? So that is, now that, you know — Hey, you're the supervisor. It's — you nodded your head when they said it, so it's like let's see you supervise. Let's see some evidence of that supervision.

[00:36:29] **Mandy Matney:** Right. Like and again, I think that our laws kind — I do think that there needs to be more clarity there as to what a — I'm not sure what Alan Wilson can and can't do as far as supervising solicitors. But it's interesting you said that. As the case is going on, a source of mine who previously worked for Duffie Stone and is very, very, very skeptical of his behavior recently was like — who's a lawyer, a previous prosecutor in his office — was like, oh, that's really interesting that they're putting that on the record about — they're saying that about Alan Wilson being in charge of solicitors.

[00:37:17] **Eric Bland:** So now that that is on the record, I would think that Alan Wilson's gonna send a memorandum to all 46 solicitors to say, "If you are going to do anything regarding somebody in the Department of Corrections regarding a sentence reduction, you better give me notice." I think now he's



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got the right, based on what the Supreme Court says. Hey, he's got the right to supervise and he's gonna do it or should do it. Don't you agree?

[00:37:48] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, and I just think — but going back to what you're saying about like, was it the law or was it emotional? I think it was both. But yeah, I'm reading this law, 17-25-65, and I still don't really get it, reading it over and over again how this was able to happen legally. Have you looked at the law?

[00:38:17] **Eric Bland:** I have and I don't get it. It was very confusing that it, you know, it clearly does seem to indicate that Substantial Assistance does give somebody the basis to get a downward departure. However, you still — it's still in conflict with what it means to get a full sentence, no parole, no good time. So how do you reconcile that?

[00:38:45] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And the argument could be made in both ways of you could assume that the legislator did not include that because they wanted murderers to be able to — they wanted to, like Todd argued, they wanted people convicted of murderer to have that possibility and to work with police. But at the same time — and okay, so the part of the law that I think that they're —

[00:39:13] **Eric Bland:** Or you can read it that they wanted to carve out murderers and say, no. Once you murder, you don't get a chance.

[00:39:20] **Mandy Matney:** Right, right. Exactly. So it could go both ways. And then, the part that I think that they're going off of is the aid to a Department of Corrections employee or volunteer who was in danger of being seriously injured or killed. But in those documents, the only proof of him doing that is like basically hearsay, and it wasn't the corrections officer who had that happen to him. It was somebody else who said that that happened. And then, turns out we looked up the woman who —

[00:39:56] **Eric Bland:** And she's a girlfriend.

[00:39:59] **Mandy Matney:** Oh, yeah. Yeah. She was a girlfriend. So I mean, she was not credible. So they should have gone to the source. That's what



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journalists do. That's what lawyers do. You don't like if you're like here, that's hearsay.

[00:40:11] **Eric Bland:** Well, they could have had a hearing, even if it was a closed hearing. Judge Manning could have demanded to have that witness, the actual participating witness, come into his court and testify under oath.

[00:40:23] **Mandy Matney:** Right. Right. And like that would be the — but again, the whole like this woman says that he saved another woman — that just should not have passed. That should have just been like absolutely not. That's not gonna cut it for letting a murderer out. We need more. And that's what like doesn't make sense. And I understand. I do think that Todd made a really, really good argument for the circumstances that he was in. But at the same time, legally and emotionally, both of those things I'm sure it led to the judge's decision. It does not make sense legally and it does not make sense if your ultimate goal is public safety. Neither one of those things make sense.

[00:41:17] **Eric Bland:** Well, for us, you know, as a partnership that we have, I thought it was good for us to show that we can skate on ice or we can skate on the street, meaning we're not just the Murdaughs. We really dove deep into this Jeroid Price matter. And so it was interesting that we got away from the Murdaughs and we really asked some very hard questions. Remember I called you about this on Monday and you said let's jump on it and you dove in hard to the deep end, Mandy. And this is kind of leading into why you're going Crime and Corruption. It's — this is what Crime and Corruption is about. That we are going to put sunlight on these things, whether it's in South Carolina or we hear about it in another state where you have your relationships with journalists across the country. You now have given a platform to people to bring this to light. And, you know, I'm almost scared to say it, but how many times does something like this Jeroid Price happen that we don't know about, Mandy? Is this a one-off? Was this a one-off, or was this business as usual?

[00:42:35] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And did you see McMaster's letter? It said that. It asked — he asked the Department of Corrections how many times has this happened before? Tell us. And the Department of Corrections gave a very vague and scary answer, which was basically, we don't know.

[00:42:53] **Eric Bland:** That is scary. That's scary.



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[00:42:55] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And it's again, like this all of this — and it's great what we do. I love what we do. I love our audience. I love how active they are and I love how much they care. But at the same time, the freaking government needs to do its job on its own at some point. And they should not need the world watching them to do the right thing. But yeah, I mean, it's great, but it's also just really frustrating. It's really, really frustrating. And the scary thing is how often does this happen? And I think the other question that I had, like you said on Wednesday, what would've happened if the Supreme Court — if it was reversed?

[00:43:39] **Eric Bland:** I think there would've been a public outcry. I really do.

[00:43:43] **Mandy Matney:** Well, there should have been because that's terrifying. That means every person, every victim who has been assured by the government that the murderer of their loved one will be put away for life or put away for 30 years, da, da, da, da, da, it means that that means nothing now.

[00:44:00] **Eric Bland:** That that person can broker information and they're gonna have information. They're gonna get it through snitches. Other people in prison that they could broker information. So a sentence doesn't mean a sentence anymore.

[00:44:11] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And it's terrifying.

[00:44:13] **Eric Bland:** It is. Totally.

[00:44:15] **Mandy Matney:** And like as we're all coming off of this Murdaugh case, that part of it was really scary because it's like Alex has a lawyer-legislative — he's got all of the ingredients that Price has. He's really good with people. He's got a lot of powerful people behind him. Solicitors, judges, he's got that. He could get them to sign something.

[00:44:39] **Eric Bland:** And you know that in his portfolio, he knows some things that could take some people down. You know that.



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[00:44:44] **Mandy Matney:** Right. Right. And so it just totally would've dismissed so much progress in the justice system if they would've ruled differently. And I thank God that they realized that and I'm glad that it went down the way that it did.

[00:45:08] And we'll be right back.

[00:45:15] **Eric Bland:** Let's talk about what's coming up in May, which is really exciting. We got so many different things. We have the Victim's Assembly at the State House on May 9th, where you're gonna speak and I'm gonna speak to the press. It's really neat that victims are being heard and they have a platform. It's not just Sandy Smith. It's the Bowens. There's other victims of crime and family that are gonna be speaking that Sarah Ford has, you know, put together, which is really exciting because for a lot of our past years, victims have kind of been left out of it out of the decision-making process. So that is really exciting. And then, why don't you talk about what you guys are doing with Crime and Corruption? Why are you doing it and what does it mean for all of us and our audience?

[00:46:08] **Mandy Matney:** I'm really excited about the Victims Rally and I'm thinking about the words that I wanna say and really taking that seriously because what I think has been wrong with the system for so long is just, like you said, the lack of focus on victims. Like it's about everybody else and they just get left behind in —

[00:46:30] **Eric Bland:** Afterthought.

[00:46:30] **Mandy Matney:** The afterthought, and there's just no empowerment behind them.

[00:46:36] **Liz Farrell:** I was thinking about what you had said I think in the last episode, Mandy, when you were talking about who the AG's office works for and who solicitors work for and who law enforcement works for and how in particular when it comes to prosecutors, they really see themselves as working for the state, not for the victims. And whether that's because they need to create — I know legally, yes, that is true. But I think that does help create some sort of emotional distance between the people that were harmed by the person that they are prosecuting.



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[00:47:06] **Mandy Matney:** I think the question now is where do we go from here? And the state recognized this week that they — that there was a major error and they're in the process of fixing it but I think that —

[00:47:24] **Eric Bland:** Are they fixing it? Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. What do you say? Where do you get that they're fixing it? They just made a decision on Jeroid Price. Where's the fix coming?

[00:47:33] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And that's what we need to focus on. That's — it's a bandaid, the Jeroid Price thing. We need somebody that we trust to go after all of this and to assure the public that they are investigating exactly what happened and that they will be transparent about that process and —

[00:47:50] **Eric Bland:** But I don't think Alan Wilson needs to appoint — I don't like it when the United States government keeps appointing special prosecutors when we have an attorney general. Let's let Alan Wilson do the job. Why doesn't he start an investigation to find out how this happened so that it doesn't happen again? I don't think we need, you know, another special prosecutor. If Alan Wilson was so adamant that this was wrong, then he's going to start an investigation. He should go before the judiciary committee. He should propose new legislation so this it will not happen again. I don't want this to be a one-off. That's our fear, Mandy, that they just took care of it on the Jeroid Price matter, but this could happen again.

[00:48:36] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And I mean, I'm with you and I hope, I hope — I just have such little faith in the government. I'll be very honest. Alan Wilson's done a good job so far with the Murdaugh stuff.

[00:48:52] **Liz Farrell:** Well, I think now is the time. I think that when David Pascoe was the special prosecutor during the Quinn affair, that was an uphill battle obviously for him. And I think now that because we do have momentum, I think we should capitalize on that. And I think Alan Wilson needs to send a message.

[00:49:07] **Eric Bland:** Why can't he do it in his office though? Why do you always have to appoint a special prosecutor? He's the Attorney General. He stood before the well of the Supreme Court. He voiced as hard as he could that this was wrong, and so he should appoint somebody like Creighton or,



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you know, another assistant AG to go look into this and find out where it's happened, find out how many times it's happened, and then go before the Senate Judiciary Committee and the House Judiciary Committee and say, here's the loophole. We're gonna close it.

[00:49:37] **Liz Farrell:** I think it sends a message that you are going to be held accountable by your peers. And that's what I think. And I don't know that he could find somebody, you know, that is completely disinterested in the state of South Carolina. But I don't know. I think when you bring in a special prosecutor, it not only allows them to — this is it for them, you know, to make or break their career in a way. But I do think that it allows for some sort of independence and maybe you have somebody who's willing — I mean, what if he appointed somebody like Mark Tinsley for instance, you know?

[00:50:07] **Eric Bland:** Well, you know, Jim Griffin was a special prosecutor underneath David Pascoe for all of those political charges for those, you know, Harrison and all the others, Quinns and Jim Griffin was a prosecutor.

[00:50:19] **Liz Farrell:** It's Justice James. When he brought up the fact — he put on the record with Alan Wilson that this wasn't a problem caused by legislator-lawyers, that this — you know, he wanted to get Alan to say that, right? That bugged me because it's, again, it's them.

[00:50:36] **Eric Bland:** Oh, they gave a free pass to Todd. They definitely did there.

[00:50:39] **Liz Farrell:** Right. And it's a free pass to Todd, but it's also a free pass to the system. And they just keep insisting that it's working well and it's fine and dandy and we all know better. So it's just — it was aggravating. And hopefully, people can see that beyond just us pointing it out.

[00:50:55] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And I saw a lawyer-legislator on Twitter. I can't even honestly remember his name. But he made a point to be like, so this needs to set like the Supreme — it needs to say that the Supreme Court, who usually sides with lawyer-legislators, didn't side with the lawyer-legislator and the system is fine. And that really bothered me because it's not fine. That's just an example of it working and the only reason why it worked is



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because there was all these people watching. I don't think any of this would've happened.

[00:51:29] **Eric Bland:** You are a hundred percent right. If the squeaky wheel wasn't getting squeaky, there wouldn't have been any grease.

[00:51:37] **Mandy Matney:** Right. Like they wouldn't have done anything. Like let's be honest, it is not working for a majority of people. It is working for a very, very slim portion of the population, which is, sorry, but white male lawyer-legislators are like at the top of the totem pole in South Carolina.

[00:51:59] **Liz Farrell:** It's their rule book that Todd is working with.

[00:52:02] **Mandy Matney:** Right. They've created it. They've created it. I mean, I spent nights and nights looking through all of Todd's bills that he has done while he has been working for the state of South Carolina, and so many of them benefit him as a lawyer and benefit his job, not necessarily the public, but his job. Some granted are probably good for everybody, but you can't ignore that. And when it comes to this and when it comes to a situation that is this egregious and is this outrageous, I think that we all have to take a step back and be like are these people actually doing their jobs and what needs to happen to fix the system? Because it's very, very, very broken.

[00:52:51] **Eric Bland:** Alright. Cups down, guys.

[00:52:54] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. Cups down. That was a good, good note to end on, Mandy. I love that.

[00:52:58] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. Cups down.

[00:53:04] **Eric Bland:** Cups down.

[00:53:07] **Outro:** This Cup of Justice bonus episode of the Murdaugh Murders Podcast is created and hosted by me, Mandy Matney, with co-host Liz Farrell, our executive editor, and Eric Bland, attorney-at-law, AKA The Jackhammer of Justice. From Luna Shark Productions.