

Mandy Matney 00:05

Hello and Happy Tuesday. I was so fired up and ready when we recorded this episode of Cup of Justice not only because we plan to discuss all the things we keep uncovering on the True Sunlight podcast in the Mica Miller case, but because of what my home teams kicker said about women's roles and a recent college graduation, Harrison Butker. I had a lot to say about him and his horribly misguided and dangerous opinions on not just women, but people in the LGBTQ community. We think we have come so far, but then someone like this guy pops off and it has me asking what year are we really IN. Premium Members, will get an extended and extra spicy version of this conversation. In addition to the biker speech, we had a really important discussion about divorce specifically in South Carolina, where Mica Miller lived before her death last month. Mica was trying to divorce her past, her husband which is a dangerous enough time for women on its own. But divorce laws make it worse for women. The laws make it harder for a person in the relationship with the least amount of money and power. So it is clear to me that this has played a huge role in what was already a huge uphill battle for Mica when you consider the pressure she must have felt from the church. As you know from last week's True Sunlight, I spoke with Charlotte Korn, who is one of Mica's best friends. Charlotte said something that is really important. Mica was a beloved member at her husband's church. And her husband JP had already experienced the repercussions of what happens when he, the pastor, goes through a divorce when his last marriage broke up. He claims that he lost a lot of members, and it was quite a setback for him. Well, as Charlotte pointed out, Mica's decision to leave JP likely would have a significant financial impact on the church as it was sure to cause another split. In fact, this is something Charlotte said JP had expressed to Mica. His fear that her



leaving him would split the congregation. On today's Cup of Justice we talk about all of that. And what Mica and all women seeking to leave bad situations was up against. Let's get into it.

Eric Bland 02:47

Cups up guys. So good to see you. I'm so heartbroken. Ben Affleck and Jen are on the outs. She's looking for a house. You know, he's doing counseling, but he's not a big counseling guy. I mean, there it is. Can't even last a year.

Mandy Matney 03:06

Of all the news, Bennifer is what you start out with. I'm shocked by that. But let's get into it.

Eric Bland 03:13

I saw it in the New York Post. And then I was just really heartbroken this week, you know, because I am a royal watcher. And Harry was over there in England for the Invictus Games and the king wouldn't see him. Even though the king had this party for like 2000 people, he would make time to see his son and then to compound that he gave a military award to William while Harry was there. This like highest military award, and William all he flew a helicopter as a nurse but never saw any war time. And Harry did two tours of duty in Afghanistan, you know, and saw a lot of carnage and things like that. And the father didn't even give him an award. So it was a tough week for me because you know, first starting off with the Royal problem and now Jennifer and Ben. I don't know how I'm gonna make it into the weekend.



Liz Farrell 04:09

Yeah, I don't know Eric, that's a lot for one man to carry.

Eric Bland 04:12

It is it's a lot of luggage.

Liz Farrell 04:14

That's really insulting now because when you think about it, the Invictus Games is about injured people who have seen combat and fan injured and war and to give the award to a Nepo baby who did the least it's looks like he flew in under the radar in terms of qualified at the things he had to do.

Eric Bland 04:34

I mean when you see the all the medals on these royal chest, you know you it's the biggest candy ass joke you ever want to see, you know that they walk around like they're Patton. And you know, very rarely do they do anything of consequence.

Liz Farrell 04:50

I like to hear that, you're on my side on that. I had a question for you guys. I've been watching. I never finished the show How to Get Away with Murder. And so I started from the beginning, have you ever watched that? Eric? I have not. It's sort of, it's a lot. It's, you gotta really be committed to Shonda Rhimes to get into the show. But one of the things I was telling Mandy about was just like, now that we're so deep into like legal stuff, like as journalists, we've covered so many topics, right? And but we've really immersed ourselves in the legal world in these last few years to be able to watch a show like that, and not just



constantly have to suspend belief because what you're seeing on the screen, you're like, that's not how it goes down. That's not how it works. Oh, my God, they you know, it used to be that like legal dramas, you would watch them and be like, okay, so he got arrested on a Friday and his trials on a Monday. We know that's not how that works. But now it's like getting into the nitty gritty, and I'm having trouble enjoying these shows. So I was wondering.

Eric Bland 05:50

You're getting too smart, right?

Liz Farrell 05:52

Well, I remember for journalism at night like remember House of Cards, Mandy, when she was sleeping with her source and like we're just like incensed?

Mandy Matney 06:01

Everyone was incensed about that. The gross congressman. Yeah, yeah. And House of Cards. Yeah, that's been going on for years, I would get really excited to watch movies about female journalists. And then the movie is all about how they slept with their source to get their scoop. And that might work for some, but it's, I've never done that. I don't know anybody. Actually, I know of one person who did that. But I don't know. Like, anybody I worked with do that. That's just in it just makes me really mad. And speaking of that, yeah.

Eric Bland 06:38

Now we're gonna move into the Chief's kicker because he wants you to give up your job, Mandy and you married, you should be home. That is



your destiny. That is the you know, that's nirvana for working women. Give up your job and go home. You're a Chiefs fan. Let's talk about that. That's just stunning.

Mandy Matney 07:00

Yes, I am a huge fan. My entire life and also when they were bad, which was for a very long time, and I don't think a lot of people realize that the chiefs were really really bad for a really long time. Yeah, we had a string of just horrible, horrible years, the whole thing just makes me really mad. First of all, I've been cheering for bucker. For years, I've never heard a word this man has said, and I've been fine with it. He's been a good kicker. And I've appreciated that. Now. I do not want to cheer for him whatsoever. And that speech was horrifying. It was at a Catholic College in Kansas City that I am kind of familiar with. I knew a few people who went to that Catholic college. It's pretty small. And I honestly don't even think the funny thing. I don't think this would have made the news at all, had it not been for the Taylor Swift effect, and so many people paying attention to everything that the Chiefs do. And I think that obviously the what he said was horrifying. But because the Chiefs have gotten all of these women interested in football and Taylor Swift has gotten all these little girls buying cheap jerseys. And this is evident in ticket sales and numbers for viewership. And they have benefited largely from women in the last year. Then they have their kicker of all people just spouting out all of this nonsense about not only women but the LGBTQ community. He said that they are a bunch of sinners. He said just he just kept going.



Eric Bland 08:42

To further compound the problem this morning Gracie Han came out and said she supports him. The owner's daughter. So can you imagine what this is going to do the locker room. Patrick Mahone says he doesn't really care because he said he said less than six words that Harrison like in like six years, but it's pretty awful. I gotta tell you.

Mandy Matney 08:59

Yeah, Grace, the daughter of the Chiefs owner kind of surprises me. But I mean, she comes from such a like that family is so so so wealthy. And she comes from such a place of privilege that it is, it's an A lot of people don't understand just the layers of why this is making women like me so mad. And I think, you know, he didn't necessarily say you are worthless if you aren't a mother or a wife. But it's the subliminal messaging that women like me have heard and YouTube lives their entire lives that like your number one thing in life is being a mother and being a wife and that is it.

Liz Farrell 09:50

So for me, where I started to get mad is the phrase diabolical lie, because and I understand what he's saying that like, you know, I have friends who are stay at home moms, I don't ever want them to feel like their work is not as valuable as a woman in the who has a career outside of the home or what have you. But diabolical lies what we've been told this entire time. And for him to say this to a Catholic school, where I believe that school started as a women's college and my right thinks and became coed at some point. So even if it didn't, but you're talking about a on the day that these women have graduated, they went to school for a reason, it wasn't to meet a kicker who can go on



the NFL, because obviously their sports teams don't do that there. But a whole nother I don't think that they're headed for the NFL. But it just sounded like he was saying that his wife's life didn't really begin or have meaning until she fulfilled her destiny as his wife and the mother of his children. And, you know, I just got back to that word diabolical because it's like we've been told diabolical lies this entire time. And I think to the point that Taylor Swift has made many times in interviews is that she's still unlearning patriarchy, like just the sort of default ideas that come in our heads about who we're supposed to be and how we're supposed to react and what we're supposed to accept in our own lives as normal and Okay, so that's where I was just And then the other thing I think, I love these, these videos on tick tock showing him in, I love the gay community coming back at him and being like, Girl, you're in a cheetah tie, and you have seven pounds of gel in your hair. And let's go through the compendium of purses that you've been carrying, like basically just showing that like, you're a fancy boy to like, what what, how dare you? How dare you say anything about us? But I think going back to like, he's known as wife since middle school. He thinks he's created this perfect little life. I love Dr. Annie Andrews. Mandy shared a video with me. She ran for Congress in our district and South Carolina, wonderful person, somebody I would, you know, I don't say this often. But like, I would love to be her best friend. I just don't. She is just so brilliant. But she made the point that this guy is a kicker. Like it says that he's like, his wife is supporting some amazing. He's not out there like finding the cure to cancer. You're a boy who kicks the ball in a boys game. And frankly, it's the position in the in, in all the positions in football. The kicker is one a woman can do too.



Mandy Matney 12:39

And it's the one you can't get touched. Yeah, you can't get it's the least manly of all the football positions. I like that. And he said, What she was saying he was so busy studying which direction to kick the ball. I mean, couldn't be you couldn't be bothered with making himself a grilled cheese. Yeah, and I the way the other thing that I went back and I read the transcript today of what he said, just to make sure that I got it right. And I noticed that he said, my wife, he kind of bragged about his wife giving up her career dreams. He said my wife gave up her career dreams. But if you ask her, I bet she would say she's completely fine with it. And she is so happy. He did not say I asked her today, and how she felt about giving up her her careers. And that just tells everything about who he is and his relationship. And that he just assumes women are perfectly happy making grilled cheese every day, and serving the man. And another great thing I saw on the internet is that just like, obviously, this whole thing is exploded. There's people saying he said everything that needed to be said he's awesome. And Bob and all these men and like, yeah, we need to go back to those times where women were in their place and black men are saying these things. But it's funny too, because somebody else said, Dude, he makes like \$4 million a year. Let's let's talk about that. And like he, there are very few people who have the opportunity for their wife to just not work at all. And to have that kind of lifestyle. Most women work because they literally have to keep kids fed. That's not what this is about. But like for him. I think the part that just really bothered me was thinking of myself as 22 year old Mandy, and how many things I was struggling with at that time between I studied sociology and college. So college was a big time for me being like, oh my gosh, I've my whole life. I've been told that I am just I need to find a husband and that I have to be beautiful and then I



have to be all of these things. And this is just actually the patriarchy telling me to do all these things. And then I'm worthless if I don't have a husband by 25. I had all of these crazy like I had to be married by 30. I thought by the time I was going to graduate, I had, my husband was going to have my husband lined up just because this is what all the media messages were telling me and what my brain was telling me and I felt a little bit worthless for not having a husband lined up at the end of college, I will say that in not only worthless, but just nervous, like I had all sorts of anxiety of, if I never find a husband, like what happens, I'm just going to sit here and I'm not going to be able to be a mother and be. These are things I worried about my entire life because of messages like what Harrison Butker said, and we now are in a place of society with social media, in the rise of women's voices in the media of women's voices were silenced for most of my life growing up, and I look back now and realize that like oh, lot of editors of newspapers were men, oh, a lot of newspapers were owned by men. The male voice was dominating these messages that we were hearing and to see Harrison Butker delivered those terrible subliminal messages in 2024, and drill into women's minds that they could go after the promotion, but it'll be nothing. And he was just saying, you will be nothing unless you have a man to serve and unless you are serving a man, and that just irks me to my core. And also because we have been on the Mike Miller story for the last week. And I just wanted to talk about that briefly. We'll talk about it a lot. But the thing I want to say in relation to Harrison Bucher is that we are noticing this over and over again, the dehumanizing of women dehumanizing of women, but also women like Mica Miller, who were taught their entire lives to serve God to serve their husband, that they were taught those messages. To be a mother and a wife is the best thing that you don't worry about your finances, don't worry about your



own career. It's your job to be a mother. And it is your job to be a wife, and how dangerous that message is to young women because they end up in positions like mica in abusive relationships that they physically cannot get out of, because they are financially dependent. And that is something that has hit me over and over and over again, it is so dangerous when women don't have their own money in their own way of escaping, and their own plan to get out. And I think Mica got married for the first time at 18. She lived a Christian life where you get married. And that's what she wanted to do. And that's what she was told to do. She was told to serve Jesus and love God and get married. And she did all those things. And I am now just very, very angry. Thinking about all the women who did what they were told, and followed the speech of Harrison butter and followed those words and then ended up in very dangerous positions.

Eric Bland 18:13

If you look back over the last couple of years, men are threatened by successful women. They're threatened by women in politics who are strong and carry a good message. We're seeing the erosion of women's rights. Back with the reversal of Roe v. Wade. We're seeing people turning on Taylor Swift the women aren't turning on Taylor Swift. It's the men who are saying that Taylor Swift is getting too popular. The critique that she's now getting is can you stop talking about and singing about your relationships are failed? Man, can you start making songs more positive? Your songs are starting to sound the same? Why don't you give us a break a little bit don't release so many songs. Too much. Your it's too much. I mean, if what you're what you're talking about Mandy is men that are really threatened all around themselves, the way they look around. They're threatened by women being equal and better, and



doing things that traditionally only men were doing. You know, now you're having Taylor Swift, be more popular than then you two are more popular than a rapper.

Mandy Matney 19:36

And then everyone. Like she's blowing all records. Right? She's bigger than the Beatles now.

Eric Bland 19:44

She's a lyricist. She writes better than anybody. She's a poet.

Mandy Matney 19:49

She's a dancer, right.

Liz Farrell 19:50

She's also aware of her own power. And I think that that's probably the most threatening part. Do you guys notice how Harrison Butker said something about? Forget if it was Order or disorder, but he was talking about how dangerous this sort of culture this is, because it is threatening the order of masculinity to masculinity. But I think unfortunately, he felt comfortable saying in this environment where there's maybe a group of people, men, certain groups of men who believe that there's a certain order that's supposed to exist. And when that worker doesn't exist, then that is the threat, right? So that kind of language feels very fascist. It feels very World War Two era like it's almost like a godlike complex where you have decided what order looks like. And anyone stepping outside that order is a threat to the bigger picture. And it just shows how imprisoned by their own lack of perspective, their own lack of you have a viewpoint that steps into



anyone shoes that isn't their own. Like they only know what they know. And they don't make any attempt to know anything else from any through anyone else's eyes. And that's, that's where the danger lies. And I think that we have to push back more on messaging like that. pushback on sort of this idea that this guy's viewpoint is what is supposed to be letting all of us know how we're supposed to be living. Because obviously, we haven't pushed back on it enough, if he felt comfortable enough to say it out loud and was cheered and was chaired.

Mandy Matney 21:28

Well, and that's the thing too, that it's just so unfortunate, because Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce have shown us that you can have a healthy relate like he he he looks super masculine, but you he has a podcast and he has lots of feelings. And he's very sweet to her. He's very considerate of her. He does all the treats are very well, they have a healthy relationship. And it's also exciting because they met in their 30s. And they're just and they're both super successful individually. And they both show up for each other and support each other. It is great for little girls across the country just see a healthy relationship in that way. And then this guy comes along and he's not ruining it.

Eric Bland 22:19

Takes a wrecking ball two tries to take a wrecking ball.

Mandy Matney 22:22

He does. He tries to take a wrecking ball and he quoted Bejeweled and I'm not the first person to point this out. Somebody else pointed this out. And I don't know which account did it first but but he quoted the



Bejeweled her song, which is about her basically dumping a mediocre man and she can't shine until she's done with him. And that's funny. And but he also the irony of that is beautiful, right? The irony of that, and he quoted familiarity breeds contempt, and a great line, whatever. But he said my teammates girlfriend, which is another just irking thing to women everywhere because Taylor Swift is the biggest thing in the universe. She's the biggest thing in the universe right now.

Eric Bland 23:09

She's just not a girlfriend.

Mandy Matney 23:12

She stands on her own, just say Taylor Swift. She's bigger than you Butker. She's bigger than your teammate. She's bigger than your whole team, as she's dominating the world right now. And you put her down in that way by saying my teammate's girlfriend. So I will be very interested to see not only what Travis Kelce does to mitigate this situation, but if he and his brother I bet him and his brother talk about it on their podcast? I bet they do. I'm not one to say Taylor needs to stand up and say something because I really hate it when a man does something wrong. And then the world puts it on a woman, the woman to fix it, like Taylor stand up and tell the Chiefs that they can't know. The Chiefs need to make a stance on this because like I said earlier, the chiefs have benefited largely from millions of dollars flowing into the chiefs in the last year because of Taylor Swift and female fans.

Eric Bland 24:08



The NFL did. The Chiefs did not. The NFL came out and said the views of Harrison Butker are not the views of the NFL not of any team owner or administration. But the Chiefs have been silent. The only thing that the Chiefs have come out with is Gracie Han. Which is terrible. She made the statement.

Liz Farrell 24:25

Can you imagine the panic of like in the NFL boardroom because they're like we have had dogfighting. We've had NFL players beating their women and now we've got like we finally are getting there. The women have finally forgiven us.

Mandy Matney 24:45

Right? Wasn't it people who like us this year's Super Bowl like the most watched ever you like who's a woman because of women right? Like they were finally getting it together and they were finally on the up and up and then and then a Harrison Butker delivers this stupid speech at Benedictine College which is like a tiny it's such a stupid scenario but because we all heard it.

Eric Bland 25:11

He wants to live in Handmaid's Tale. He does. It's a Handmaid's Tale speech, but it's his dream of what the society would look like. And it looks like Handmaid's Tale.

Mandy Matney 25:22

Right in it. I don't know if you guys have seen the memes but they're like, What the what? What Harrison Butker wants the cheers for next year and it's The Handmaid's Tale.



Eric Bland 25:37

She's got a new series out called the veil, which is so good. It's on. Flisabeth Moss.

Mandy Matney 25:43

I really liked her. Let's take a quick commercial break, and we'll be right back. Yeah, but Butker that whole thing was just absolutely absurd. And just, and he kept making it worse, and it kept going on and on. I just really hope that the NFL does something. And it's also interesting that that speech came out the exact same week as schedules for the NFL teams and ticket sales started, because the Chiefs keep posting all of these videos like our schedule and everything. And women are just wrecking them in the comment section. Women are like, really? Oh, I would like to go to a game but I have to make grilled cheese for my husband this week. Oh, I was going to buy tickets. But I don't think second class citizens are allowed at At Arrowhead anymore. Like they are just getting destroyed.

Eric Bland 26:50

Well, they came when they came at Ray Rice, rightfully so when he slapped and spit at his girlfriend in the elevator, his wife, and he got suspended for a year as he should have. Yeah. This is spitting in women's faces. And something needs to be done. I'm sorry, when you were the shield?

Liz Farrell 27:13

Well, let's talk about what you guys mean, when you say something should be done. Like, are you saying that he should be kicked off the team?



Eric Bland 27:19

Get rid of him, he should be suspended when you were the shield. When you go where that shield is in the NFL, you do lose a little bit of your liberty. Because you represent a team, you represent a league. And what you say has an effect on the fans of your team. There are you can't just unzip your uniform and say, Well, geez, I'm going to just go out and be the, you know, a different person, you were the shield. I'm sorry, I'm a little bit of the NFL in this and they need to do something. This is not funny. It's not fair. And it's offensive. Not only to women, it's offensive to me, because I have a wife and a daughter who's a surgeon, right? And my wife's and a cat.

Liz Farrell 28:03

And just I mean even just like let's take them it's not just this is a guy with an opinion of traditional values, right? It's not just that we're talking about a man who's talking about order. He's using keywords dog whistle words for authoritarianism, a tradition not just it goes past traditionalism, and religion and religion. Yeah, he's looking at. He's looking at an ideal society for him, which would put him at the center of the universe with his god or what have you. Exactly. So it's not just as simple as this is a guy with a differing opinion than the majority of America. It's, it's a guy who's advocating for a huge setback in society. And not only that, but speaking about homosexuality as a grave sin in 2024, you're putting people's lives at risk, because you're now offering some sort of, I don't know, some sort of cover for people who think that way is amping them up in some way. And I think there's an incitement that can happen when you have somebody with a platform this big. And this important, who reached far more people, like you said, Mandy, then the intent probably was because it's a small school. So it's



like, millions of people have now heard these words. So they have some sort of responsibility to do something and I think I think you're right, I think suspension is the right way. But it's just like, how do you keep his supporters from like, they will understand that as man expressed his opinion, and now he's getting punished for it. But it's more than just expressing your opinion. It's, you know what I'm saying? I remember saying this to my boss at a newspaper. It's just in this was sort of the corporate culture but it was also one of the more I look at it the misogynistic problem as well because I no matter what the standard how the standard was set, I Mandy and I would sprint toward that standard, we But they would say get this many viewpoints or get this many views or write this many stories, we sprinted to it. And once we got close enough or past that goal, they would switch it and change it back. So I used to tell him that he was telling us to run to the window. And right when we got to the window, he screamed, run to the wall. And it was just this feeling of like, no matter what you achieve, as a woman, the standards get changed, like the goalposts get moved, because they thought they were setting something that you couldn't reach in the first place. And once you once they see that you can and that you did and that you were willing to do the work to get there, they move it because they need to keep you in this place of feeling not good enough, because that's where the power is, that's that's where they can cash in on just the only thing that makes them special, which is that they were born with a penis, no offense.

Mandy Matney 30:49

I don't even think I've talked about this. I was furious reading the negative reviews about Taylor Swift's latest album. And that came out about a month ago, a few weeks ago. And I don't think it's by



coincidence that all of the major legacy news outlets, each came out with like an individual piece of something along the lines of Taylor Swift as Pete, they all had a hit piece, they all had individual hit pieces. And I don't even know if it's a subconscious thing, if it's just male editors being like we gotta take they but they feel extremely threatened by her because she destroys a lot of the she destroys the the bricks that they have built their business on, she just pummeled right through them.

Liz Farrell 31:49

And we'll talk about the anonymous guy, the one that was like, I'm not gonna put my name onto this piece.

Mandy Matney 31:54

Because there was a piece there was a piece that said so many Swifties went after the last negative review that we which magazine was that? I think it was, was it Paste, Paste, Paste, like a music magazine. And it also just, it exposed her recent album, her recent album, in that effect also exposed just how stupid music reviews are. It's like, oh, you're some? You're some pinky up guy from New York who like, decides what is good. And what's bad

Liz Farrell 32:27

Arbiter of culture.

Eric Bland 32:30

They kill a Broadway show with a review.



Mandy Matney 32:32

It's stupid, because it's like, that's your opinion, art is a matter of different opinions. And what Taylor Swift has done is given women art that they understand and they relate to, and it makes them feel validated, and it makes them feel better about themselves. And we really haven't had that and an artist to the level that she has done for as long as she has done, and it is scaring the hell out of men. And I am here for it. I think that it's hilarious that all CNN like took their article about her back, they retracted it, because I didn't see that. I mean, it was just crazy. But it's like, first of all music reviews, it's let's, let's all just realize that nobody is the king of music. Just because you're a music reviewer. That doesn't mean that you can like to listen to an album one time and you are the one to decide whether or not whether or not it'll be a success. She blew all Spotify records like and most most records on Spotify are held by her for like downloads per day, etc, etc. And she blew all those out of the water. Like just look at the numbers. The album is fantastic. And some loser at the New York Times who wants a power trip isn't going to stop that. And I think it with Caitlin Clark, same thing, like they just want to destroy her. And also all these media outlets are trying to act like they're liberal and they're into women's rights at the same time while doing this stuff and tries to be crazy. You're not.

Liz Farrell 34:05

Yeah, it's just another day in the life of being a woman. Eric, it's really like it's so predictable.

Eric Bland 34:12

We were talking about the difficulties of women, you know, when they realize that the relationship is toxic with their partner, you know, with a



man, whether it's a spouse or boyfriend, how difficult it is to extract yourself safely from that relationship and the system. The family court system is not built for speed. I can tell you that. If you think the civil courts or criminal courts are slow, the family court is brutal. You will file a motion today on an issue of visitation or the the other party is not bringing the kid back or you know, not doing including us on In school functions or you know, medical appointments, you file a motion today, it won't get heard, I am telling you until October, it is brutal. And how do you manage a relationship? I have a friend whose husband walks out. She has four children, she's a stay at home mother, he's cut her off financially, they have a special needs child, it's just frightening. And, you know, he doesn't want to pay any money, you know, for a woman or that other spouse who's the stay at home spouse, the system isn't built for speed. And it's difficult, you know, if you have joint bank accounts, or you don't have your own credit, or you don't have your own independent ability to make a living. It's frightening. It's frightening. And that imbalance of power is used against you. And I see it over and over again.

Mandy Matney 36:02

I've seen that too, especially in a Mica Miller case. It's kind of just really hit me how screwed up our laws are, and how they just simply aren't built for, to look out for women who are in abusive relationships, and no financial help. The mica Miller case is especially horrible, because she tried really hard to get a lawyer to help her for a long time. And if you are in that position, as a woman who has been a housewife, who again, has followed all of the Butker rules of life of serving her husband and serving God, etc, etc. If you wake up one day and realize that you're in a an abusive relationship that you have got to get out of the system



makes it extremely hard, almost nearly impossible, because you don't have any money of your own. You go to lawyers, and they ask for a retainer. Well, what do you do, and it's just the cycle. And then in the meantime, JP Miller, her strange husband, who she was trying to divorce, that guy had no problems ever getting a lawyer. Why because of money, and it's horrible.

Eric Bland 37:16

And now he's doing this, this kind of, well, I'm really a decent guy, because I see her everywhere. When I'm in the mall. I see somebody that looks like her. And I say, Mica, oh, it turned out to be your sister. You know, I'm seeing her everywhere. I went to her grave, and I'm trying to resurrect her. I think I'm going to be able to get her back. You know, did you hear that crazy? sermon? He did? Yes.

Liz Farrell 37:41

That guy is somebody that you want to keep talking because he's going to do himself and so I'm definitely going to talk himself into a corner and if he hasn't already, but let's talk a little bit about what Michael was facing, because I think it's important for people out there to know that how South Carolina does divorce. It's in as your resident expert in the I'm the only one of the three of us who has had a divorce in South Carolina. Congratulations. Thank you very much. We are going to talk about this. So the first thing is that you cannot physically live together for a year and a no fault divorce, which means you have a choice. Your first choice is you and you think when you're at that point, you're like, I'm gonna go for a fault divorce and there's three grounds you can get a fault divorce, if there's abuse, physical or what have you abuse, an affair or there's addiction, habitual drunkenness, right, habitual drunkenness,



where some sort of drug or drug addiction, but here's what it is. So that a no fault divorce means that you can get it on the fast track, which is basically six months versus a year, right? It means that you need a lawyer. Okay, so a retainer for a divorce lawyer. When I was doing this was about \$2,500.

Eric Bland 39:00

So it's about \$5,000. About \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Liz Farrell 39:02

Where does that come from? Because in addition to that, you physically cannot be in the home. So looking at the apartment, when I got an apartment, it was much less but a one bedroom apartment in where Mica was living was about \$1,400. I looked this up. So she would not only have to have first and last month or whatever the deposit is, she would have to have a car in her name. Even though I was lucky in that I was financially able to do everything very neatly. In my divorce when I decided to leave my husband, I had put my name on a waiting list for an apartment. I had the money, it was fine. I could get the house, the apartment furnished whatever I was very, very lucky. So with Mica and with me even with those circumstances, when I decided to tell my husband I told him in a public place so that there would not be any sort of outbursts. And one of the first things he said to me Was what car are you going to drive because you don't own any cars, the cars were in his name. So, you know, it's not something you think about because you're just like, Oh my God, that's when I drive. So he and he didn't, you know, to his credit, he did not follow through that I got to drive. Okay, I got to keep driving the car, even though it wasn't the same. But that was where he went because he was feeling defensive. It was the only power



he held over me in that moment. And he cashed in on it instead. So when you look at Mica, you know, we saw that she had two cars registered to her will need to it appears that she was driving, neither of them looks like she was driving a car that belonged to her and her roommate, in fact, when she was found dead in North Carolina. So that's that's a pattern you can see through the police reports just how those cars were something that was leveraged leverage to you know, he took the car when she went into the hospital when he involuntarily had her had her committed involuntarily. He used whatever little piece of power and that's a little piece of power. So you're trying to get a divorce in South Carolina, you have to live away from your spouse for so let's just say this, let's say you want to go for...

Eric Bland 41:07

Not only live but no sexual relations.

Liz Farrell 41:11

If you guys are cannot have sexual relations, you know, trying to talk it out.

Eric Bland 41:15

Trying to talk it out and reconcile or whatever.

Liz Farrell 41:19

You have a night where you make a bad choice and you right, that's that's the thing, you have to have somebody testify.



Eric Bland 41:25

If you had relations with the person that you're married to the clock starts over.

Liz Farrell 41:31

And you're like, Oh, well, why don't you just lie about it, they don't need to know you have to literally get a third party to testify that you have not been intimate with your spouse for the past 12 months, it is mortifying it is to even ask a friend to do that to have to go on the record about something that they may or may not have any sort of knowledge about. And in my case, I wanted to be like, I'm on it this private, like I wasn't trying to get all this stuff out there.

Eric Bland 41:57

And don't have sex by the way, during the time when you're going through a divorce. Right? Don't meet somebody and have sex or you'll get nailed for adultery, because you're still married. Right?

Liz Farrell 42:09

It's awful. Mandy, it's awful. It's an it's an I'm telling you like I had the best case scenario in terms of I had money, right? I had a spouse who wasn't horrible to me, I had you know, I, I had the best case scenario. And it is horrible. And it's embarrassing, and it's expensive. And even under the best case scenario where I had a spouse who wasn't he was not bad to me. Really. I mean, I can pick it apart. But like, when you look at like what Michael went through with JP, he was nothing like that. When you look at that, and look at that, I see what I still had to go through the pressure, the stress. So just people out there with South Carolina laws, and how you have to do this sort of like perfect clean



escape from your husband. That's one thing. But then now let's add a husband who doesn't want you to leave and and what they can do in terms of using their power, their money, their position, whatever it takes. You are in such a powerless position, she was at a zero when it came to power. And that's what's so heartbreaking about about her death.

Mandy Matney 43:16

I just want to say this. It's just baffling. I had no idea that that's how you have to get a divorce in South Carolina until Liz told me that. And that's mortifying and horrifying. And who made these rules?

Liz Farrell 43:29

Who made these rules?

Mandy Matney 43:33

And who benefits from them? Let's think about that. Oh, God. So funny. Man, men dead. And they made it extremely hard for women to get away. That's what I mean. Granted, I am sure there's many scenarios of men trying to divorce women who are abusive, I'm sure that happens as well. But it's a really, really bad system that makes it so difficult to divorce someone. I remember years ago, when David and I started very, very early on in our relationship, David's initial view of marriage was I don't want the government involved in my relationship, and I was like, Whatever, I'll convince you.

Liz Farrell 44:21

And then you see the tax break.



Mandy Matney 44:25

But again, I was programmed my entire life, to want a marriage into one big wedding and to one all these things. I like every other little girl, thought about our wedding for a very long time. Never really thought about the government being involved and never thought about actually getting out of a marriage and what that entailed.

Eric Bland 44:50

It's the effect of the religious institutions on the government that they want you to when you make that promise for better or worse sickness and health. You know, Richard For, they want you to work really hard at trying to save the marriage, there's states that you have no fault divorce, that you can go to Vegas or whatever, where you could get a divorce, like in a week, or you know, 30 days in Vegas where you go to Dominican Republic, you can get it immediately if both of you want to go there. So the religious institutions don't want it to be so easy. And I'm okay with it not being so, so easy, because, you know, people quickly get into marriage thinking that they can quickly get out. This whole discussion shows you can't quickly get out of marriage. So it's a serious thing. And you're right, Mandy, we don't think about government, we think about love when we're getting married about love, but we don't think about well, what is somebody watching over my shoulder here, and they're gonna dictate to me? You know.

Liz Farrell 45:52

I love my life. Did you to get married? Yeah, I did. So I thought about government a lot. And Massachusetts. I got married in Boston. Yeah, you had to. And it was like a little window of time where you had to be able to do it, you know, just enough before the wedding, but not too far



in advance. Like, it did prove that you're not, I forget what it was like, related. And then it was like, I want to say that there are a couple like, you know, bubonic plague type diseases that they were making sure you didn't have, like, I forget what they are. And then I think they were looking for STDs, too. I don't even it's just sort of weird, because you're like, What do you want your business? But yes, Eric, I think you do want it, you know, you don't want people going on just getting a divorce on a whim. But I think when we're looking at the scales being very tipped in the favor of the person who has the most power in the relationship, that's where we have to look at it and ask for a change of some sort. Or there should be like an entire advocacy system, like there should be nonprofit, if I ever win the lottery, or the Powerball, I'm going to set up some sort of nonprofit situation that helps any woman who wants to get a divorce from her crappy husband, helps her through the process. whether that sets her up in an apartment, gives her enough money for retainer for a lawyer puts puts her on equal footing with the person who's preventing her from from being able to move on with her life, because that is what we do not have. And so even if Mica had gone for a fault, divorce, even if she had said, my husband's having an affair, or there's abuse, whatever she she had said, that then creates another problem. So it's not as simple as you check a box. And you're like, yes, he cheated on me. So can I have my divorce now, please? It's more I have to no show. I have to have a private investigator to show that he did this stuff.

Eric Bland 47:35

I have to have a third inclination Opportunity.



Liz Farrell 47:37

Don't they? inclination opportunity? I mean, come on. So I feel like yes, okay, you get that. But you also have to show I was told that I needed phone records and all sorts of things like, I was told that you need a lot of stuff, right? Um, and you then are now putting their income in jeopardy. So when you start to make these allegations publicly, in a court system that anyone can access, and you're saying that they're abusive, they're drug addicts, they cheated on me all the time. Here's what he did after outline it now for the government to agree, you've now aired your entire dirty laundry. So now that this guy isn't going to be able to have an income, and now you're even more screwed? Yeah, so is a bad bad system.

Mandy Matney 48:21

So when you said that you could go to Vegas or the Dominican Republic? If you got married in any state, you can just go to Vegas or how does that work?

Eric Bland 48:35

You have to establish some kind of residency. So David asked me the question, well, what happens if I was married in South Carolina, but I went established residency in Pennsylvania, you could file for an action in Pennsylvania and some spouses do but it's much harder when you have children because somebody's going to immediately go to court and say, you can't take your children away from me and the judge is going to say, You got to be within 10 miles of your spouse for the children. And you say, Mandy, I just got a job with the New York Times. Wait a minute, I gave up my journalism job when I married and have children. But now, I just got a job offer from the New York Times you



know what a family court judge in Richland County is going to say you can't take it.

Liz Farrell 49:17

This is a state where they don't want the government involved in your life. And yet they're involved in every facet, every possible way.

Eric Bland 49:25

It's only involved in your life when it can't when we want it otherwise.

Mandy Matney 49:30

So and when it benefits men like this whole thing about women also have been programmed to be shameful about their sexual lives just in general. Our entire lives. We're just told that it's a shameful thing to talk about. And Liz for you to have to ask your friend to testify about your sexual life and very private details. And again in a state that claims to not like the government involved in their lives.

Liz Farrell 50:06

And double standards everywhere, unfortunately. But you know, what a fun fact. I was looking at Mica's or sorry, JPS first divorce was I had the same divorce judge as him and his first wife. Look at me.

Eric Bland 50:25

Have you learned anything since last week that we don't know about her about what's going on? Do you think there's an investigation done by her family? Or is there still a quiet investigation being done by either North Carolina, South Carolina Law Enforcement, or people in her church talking? What have you found out a lot? Yeah,



Mandy Matney 50:45

There's all sorts of stuff going on. Let's talk about it in a minute after a short break. Eric, to answer your question earlier, we've learned a ton about Mica in the last week, specifically in relation to her relationship with her husband. We just have been talking to her really good friend Charlotte Corn on the phone a whole lot. And Charlotte has receipts on receipts and receipts showing how abusive JP was in their relationship and how hard Mica tried to get out. And she tried to help her friend get out. And she tried to go to the elders of the church and they didn't care about my gun. They said they saw the abuse. And they kind of shrugged and said there was police involved too. Police have been involved several times. Mica had called police. How many times did we find out Liz, it was several.

Liz Farrell 51:57

I mean, we're talking about just during the point where she left on the last time there were several times where she had to call police to report that there are trackers on our car. We're still waiting on some of the police reports from one of the agencies up there because we believe that there's more in particular one that shows that she had reported him for slashing her tire. But I think what's important to know...

Eric Bland 52:19

You said the word last time so she tried to leave him many times or different times.

Liz Farrell 52:24

Yeah. So there was a big blow up in November 2022. She wasn't, I don't think she was specifically trying to maybe like to leave him but cool off



period. And then October 2023. She had filed for divorce and later went on a trip to Kenya on a mission where church members had convinced her that she hadn't done enough to make her marriage work. So when she came back, that got dismissed, and then here we are, she filed again. In April, I believe it was April, right before her death.

Mandy Matney 52:57

Yeah and she also went to Kansas for a couple months. In last year to get away from JP Yeah, she tried a lot. And her friend, something that really stuck with me is just how big of a moment it was for her to finally serve papers to JP that took months and months of courage and working and getting the money for a retainer for a lawyer. Getting that process going was just an uphill battle. And then she was constantly hearing from people in the church saying, You can't do this to the church, you haven't done enough for your marriage. And from JP saying you will split the church again, you will ruin the church if you divorce me, and just all sorts of psychological abuse trapping her in this marriage and the fact that he was served papers two days before she was found dead. It's just nothing is sitting. Right. It's not adding up. It's not adding

Liz Farrell 54:04

I think it's important that we're clear with people that like there wasn't evidence of physical abuse, right? It was more control, emotional, psychological. It's more insidious, for sure. It's worse.

Mandy Matney 54:19

Yeah. Or it's worse, as we've been talking about, and women would take the bear and a day, this is a perfect example. bears don't psychologically



ruin you know, they just maybe kill you. But at least it's not a long drawn out process of convincing you that you're crazy, convincing everybody else around you that you're the problem. I've just been absolutely appalled. Going through the details of this woman's life and her relationship, the level of mental destruction that she went through. I would take the bear any day.

Eric Bland 54:57

It's a great term; mental destruction. Yeah.

Mandy Matney 55:01

And what we another thing that we found out is that JP wanted Mica to have a cosmetic surgery and her friends and family square that that is where things went really wrong with Mica. And he was taking care of her during that time period. And that is when he was saying things are wrong. She's acting crazy. And then he started apparently pushing a doctor and we're gonna find out what doctor they were going to, to get her on lithium pills. And there's just a lot. I think the other appalling thing is, once again, just like the Murdaugh story, there's a lot of people with blood on their hands here, no matter who pulled the trigger, no matter what happened. There is a lot of people who enabled this man to mentally destroy this woman and her life's ended now. And so now it's our job to pull back the layers of everything that was done to her, and we're on it, go do it. We're on it.

Eric Bland 56:07

Tear him up, tear him up.



Liz Farrell 56:09

And can we reflect a little bit on what you were saying earlier Mandy about how he was afraid that her leaving him was going to split the church. And I think it's important for people to understand that. It's not just oh, this side believes Mica that side believes JP, there's a financial stake here. If we look at a church as a business, and if you don't think it is you're gonna have to really think about that. Because before you answer that with yourself, because it's the business, it's tithing, it was the core way this church got its money. And for people to tithe, they need to have some sort of faith in their pastor some sort of belief that this is the right church for them. And once you see a pastor who's already gone through a high profile affair, which he did with my God left his his wife with who had four kids, he had a kid before that his father has had a ton of controversy, including an accusation of exposing yourself in public and employing slave labor he got in trouble with the federal government pleaded guilty to that slave labor.

Mandy Matney 57:12

Slave labor, Eric. Slave labor, right.

Liz Farrell 57:16

Right. So we talk about like the fact that this church already has the sort of shaky, they talk about solid rock, but it's on shaky ground, because you've got, you've got the you've got this history, and then you have this beloved person in their churches, the pastor's wife, that you look at her. We don't even need to have talked to Mica Miller. We don't need to have known her, you look at the openness of her face, or just she's a softness to or she is happy to meet you and look at her. She just has somebody



who's so welcoming. She just has an aura about her that's pure and beautiful.

Mandy Matney 57:49

A beautiful singing voice. People loved her in that church.

Liz Farrell 57:52

So now we talk about what you have a board of elders, you have people whose livelihoods depend on people tithing at that church on giving their money. It's a multi million dollar business. It's that Yes. If you were to tide up 700 members of the Church according to documents online, you take 10% of their salary. Yeah, oh, total salary, and you're looking at millions of dollars. And that doesn't mean I'm not saying that's what they took in. I don't know what they took. And I'm just saying that, based on that equation alone, if you're encouraging tithing and require a lot in some way, there you go. So you're looking at something much bigger than a marriage, you're looking at somebody who was putting the church in jeopardy. And I just want us to all think about that for a little bit. Because it's not just a simple relationship. She wasn't just trying to divorce JP. She was trying to divorce JP and the elders. That's the way I see it. Anyway. That's my opinion.

Mandy Matney 58:48

Right? And she was programmed her entire life of thinking to serve God and thinking that her church was the way of serving God. And then JP told her, if you're basically betraying God, if you divorce me, then you are going to ruin the church, and that's all your fault. And that is a whole lot. And I I didn't understand that until Charlotte explained that



part of their relationship. When we look at how hard it was to leave. It was so hard for her because of the church aspect.

Liz Farrell 59:26

So Eric, what kinds of claims Do you think that the family could have in terms of getting some accountability here legally, we've already have the will.

Eric Bland 59:37

I mean, somebody's going to be appointed special administrator that we talked about or personal representative or stay, and there could be claims against the church. If the church knew what was going on, and the elders did nothing about it. It's a supervision type of thing. They could bring claims directly. Again, asked him if you know he did contribute to her death or in a way that it becomes a wrongful death, this guy's exhibiting really strange behavior. So I'm not going to take his word for anything, and neither should the family and neither should law enforcement. But I'm encouraged by the fact that the family said they're going to do their own independent investigation and hire their investigators. And if Mandy and Liz had on it, somebody's in trouble. That's all I gotta say. Sure. I wouldn't want you guys. I wouldn't want you guys looking in my closet. Okay. Yeah.

Mandy Matney 1:00:31

Well, and there's just a lot of strings to pull here with is African missions. And there's other charities, there's a school, there's just all sorts of very, what would you call this?



Liz Farrell 1:00:49

It's insidious. There's just a bunch of like, auxiliary. You think it's just maybe the okay.

Eric Bland 1:00:55

This way? Is it a fundamentalist church, isn't it?

Liz Farrell 1:00:59

Southern Baptist, but it's not affiliated with the Southern Baptist Baptist Convention. So, okay, it's independent in that way. But if we go back to Paul Murdaugh hitting the bridge with the boat, and looking at that as like the point of inception, for when Alex life started to fall apart, the day JP Miller's life fell apart is that is the day Mica was found dead? Because it's not just a husband. This is a relationship between a husband and wife. Like I said, it's the relationship between Mica and the church. It's also what the church was up to and we've already said what the history is there. But you know, like we reported in true sunlight this week, we got confirmation that the FBI has been asked to look into the case. And from what we're hearing behind the scenes, it seems like they are looking into light. We're not sure what the nature of their investigation is, we know they're not looking into my good stuff. So what's left after that? What's left the church, the church, money, money, and all of that, which one thing I wanted to talk about, Mandy and I were talking about this before the show a little bit, but, you know, the family is conducting its own investigation, which like you said, Eric is encouraging, and we hope that they continue with that. But in this case, it's special. And I think what we're going to start seeing more in the future is sort of a public reaction to a case like this, where so many people online right now are using public documents. They're really



scrutinizing the information that came out from Robeson County Sheriff's Office, they are asking questions that investigators should have asked, they are pointing out where law enforcement has failed, they are doing their own investigation, for better or for worse. And sometimes a lot of times for better, I think that we're going to be seeing a new age in law enforcement. You know, there's sort of an exodus after the George Floyd murder. You saw an exodus and law enforcement were just so many so many people laughed, because they felt like oh, being a cop so hard today. And it's, you know, we can't we're not going to put up with this type of scrutiny. Well, now you've got people competing with you for your investigators jobs, too.

Eric Bland 1:03:11

And so I think they're challenging you, they're not taking the gospel from the microphone anymore. They're not just saying it's, oh, it's not soft, just because you're saying it's soft. It's not soft.

Liz Farrell 1:03:21

It's exciting. It's kind of exciting. I mean, I can see where it'd be irritating to the police. But my God, like we're seeing things every day that people are sending us that, gosh, the police should have caught that or should have asked that question. And it goes back to what we were saying last week is that there needs to be some mechanism in place for women who are found dead, you know, by first glance through suicide, because everything needs to come to a full stop. And I think that when you look at it, you're like, Oh, the evidence is here. The receipts are in the car, she called 911. Okay, job's done, boys, we can go home. It's we need something that prevents them from being able to say that and to say, here's a checklist of all the things that you need to make sure it got



done on this crime scene until you can say it's a suicide for sure. Did you test your hands for gunshot powder residue? Did you test the gun for fingerprints, even though you think she held it to her own head?

Eric Bland 1:04:16

Whose gun was it? Where was the gun obtained? When was it obtained?

Mandy Matney 1:04:21

Right, all of those things, and even though they suspected it to be a suicide immediately, it seems very obvious that they were treating JP Miller and again this is tough with laws because she was trying to she was trying to divorce him. She was trying to, for him to have no right to her, was like next to be the next of kin and she was trying really hard to split that and it is very obvious, especially talking to Charlotte who spoke with JP the day after she was found dead that police were telling him a lot of information of what They found and what was going on and they should have been treating him as a suspect suspect. And that's very wrong to and it also seems like he pointed them down several paths like that they just kind of took his word for it and moved on. And yeah, there should be something in place when you are trying to divorce a man he should not have the right to access information in the investigation of your death. Yeah.

Liz Farrell 1:05:28

So he's yes, there needs to be something that prevents men from being just the default next of kin when there's a suicide there has ended there just needs to be some investigatory mechanism in place, but one quick thing. Additionally, the idea of her crossing state lines to kill herself has



bothered me from the beginning. And it's not just I understand or a county is really close. It's right there. But what a benefit that was because Robeson County Sheriff's Office doesn't have at their fingertips information about her divorce. The way if in South Carolina, she had been found dead one little search ahead, she killed herself in Orange County. One little search of the system would have told them.

Mandy Matney 1:06:12

Oh all the police reports of her saying he's stalking me. He's harassing me.

Liz Farrell 1:06:17

All the police reports. I'm trying to get a divorce. Yeah, so who benefited from her dying in North Carolina?

Mandy Matney 1:06:25

Right and it's just a very weird place. Like her friend Charlotte said she just can't see her picking that she was a very intentional person. It's not a pretty park. Mica was into the beach. She was into beautiful places. She was ended hiking, like really beautiful trails in North Carolina. But that is not Robeson County, North Carolina is not a place that you spend to go on a beautiful trail. So it's like, What was you do walk? Why? So we are peeling back all of the many layers to that story, and it just keeps getting more crazy.

Eric Bland 1:07:02

Well, I'll tell you guys, this episode has been very therapeutic for me. It's been a interesting Cup of Justice episode, we are talking about justice for women and justice for victims. And it's neat how we weaved in you



know what is really going on in society with legal cases. So I really enjoyed this episode, and I'm gonna go home and um, when I see Renee, I'm going to be very thankful more so than usual, and I should be always thankful but I'm gonna give her a big hug and say, I'm really happy. I'm glad that I don't have to go through some of the stuff that we talked about during our show today.

Mandy Matney 1:07:43

Yeah, amen to that. Well, that said cups down everybody thanks guys.

Eric Bland 1:07:47

You were really spot on. Cups down. Cups down.

Mandy Matney 1:08:17

Cup of Justice is a Luna Shark production created by me Mandy Matney and co-hosted by journalist Liz Farrell and attorney Eric Bland. Learn more about our mission and membership at lunasharkmedia.com. Interruptions provided by Luna and Joe Pesky.